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Great B. and Ireland
AN K

ENQUIRY

INTO

THE PRESENT ALARMING STATE

OF THE

NATION.

SHEWING

THE NECESSITY OF A REFORM

IN

GOVERNMENT,

AND

A SPEEDY REDUCTION OF TAXES;

AN ADEQUATE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE;

AND

RESTORATION

OF

TRIENNIAL PARLIAMENTS.

BY A FRIEND TO LIBERTY, TO THE COMMUNITY,
AND A SOUND CONSTITUTION.

Tempora mutantur, adhuc modi iidem perseverant.

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TO THE READER.

THE Revolution in France is an Event the most extraordinary, that the history of our time has produced, or which former times can produce; it has not a parallel in History, so big with wonder, even to astonishment. It seems to predict, almost to threaten the downfall, the total overthrow of despotism, and the extirpation of all hereditary Despots out of Europe. Mr. Burke says, "It *looks*, to me, as if I were in a great Crisis, not of the affairs of France alone, but of all Europe, perhaps of more than Europe. All circumstances taken together, the French Revolution is the most astonishing that has *hitherto* happened in the World." It is, indeed, most extraordinarily so; and, the convulsions into which the nation was thrown alarming, and must strike every human breast with dismay; to which, the Riot in 1780, which is so recent in memory, cannot but contribute. Yet, dreadful and tremendous as that Riot appeared, without a Head or Leader, to guide and direct their operations, there was not the appearance of that Anarchy which it was reasonable to expect. Plunder, it is evident, was not the object; the Catholics, or Papists, were the victims of their rage, and marked for destruction. Their first object was (like taking the Bastille) to demolish the Prisons, and set the Prisoners free; and next, the head of the Law, and of the civil Magistracy, who were obnoxious to them, felt the fury of their vengeance. Others, who were not so, went along the streets, and even through the Mob, unmolested; and attended to their own Business, with their Shops open, and with rich goods in them, without any attempt being made on them; which, duly considered, could scarcely be imagined or expected, from such a lawless rabble.

The perturbations in Europe, occasioned by the despotic German Powers, attacking the French, evinces their panic; fearing that it may be their own fate in the end; but the attempt of Prussia and the Prince of Brunswick, to reduce them to their former state of slavery, and bring about a counter Revolution, was truly ridiculous; and shews, how weak their Arms, when the attack is made against the Cause of Liberty;

which will ever be superior to the feeble efforts of Despotism to shake, much less to overturn, being founded on a rock of adamant. What the British Ministry has in view is known only to themselves; but I am of opinion, that the measures they have taken, hitherto, are unjustifiable, and the great preparations making for War, is without a just foundation; and that, their conduct, in this great Crisis, is not only impolitic, but is reprobated by every moderate, and disinterested Englishman, who has the good of the Nation, and the welfare of the Community at heart; and, that it is entirely against the general voice of the People. I am apprehensive of the event, and dread the issue, if they are determined to commence Hostilities, without any real provocation; and that, they will be sensible of the mistake, when it is too late to retreat, with honour; as in the contest with the Colonies; and am clearly of opinion, that it will terminate as little to the advantage, as to the honour of England; but may, more probably, render us the laughing stock of all the world.

Can it be expected, that an Army of mercenaries, hired for slaughter, of which ours is chiefly composed, is able to stand against one composed of the Sons of Freedom, united in the Cause of Liberty? have we not experienced it to our cost? who, when put to it, would (like the brave Volunteers of Ireland) in so just a Cause, to a Man, rise, and take up Arms in her defence; for every ten that we could bring into the Field, they would bring a hundred. Let the fate of Broglia be remembred; who, with his thirty thousand mercenaries, disciplined troops, fled from an undisciplined Army of ragamuffins; some few of them with Fire arms, others with Forks, Spits, and Racks too; what ever fell in their way, Clubs, Staves, and Stones, with which they assailed and so annoyed the Enemy, that they were soon put to the rout, dispersed, and with the utmost precipitancy made to fly, with their brave Commander, from the field of Battle; leaving the heroic Sons of Freedom victorious. But, should they need assistance, the Americans would join them; and then, what hope could England have of reaping any advantage from the contest? but much might accrue to the People, from a junction with France and America.

WHATEVER notions we may have imbibed, from custom, time immemorial, of the necessity for Dignities and subordination in a State, with Titles and Honour, I am well convinced, that, if it were not in so disproportionate a degree, it would operate much better for the general good, and advantage of Society; and that, Honour and Titles should not be hereditary. Titles, when bestowed only as badges of honour, on those who have deserved well of the State, in the services they have rendered it, seem to be intended, and well calculated to incite emulation, to great and laudable Actions; but, to be hereditary is most absurd, and has rather a contrary effect. But, if they are inheritable, at all, they should be debased, every remove, and become extinct at the third or fourth generation; unless the successor to them achieved fresh honour; in that case, to be restored to the original dignity, with additional lustre. But when they are bestowed, without other merit or desert, than being possessed of a large Estate, as is very frequent, they lose much of their value, if they have *any*, none that is intrinsic.

Respecting hereditary succession to the Crown; if the high Office of a King be a necessary appendage thereto, and absolutely so, to constitute good Government; I am of opinion, that provided he be not wrong headed, obstinate and mulish, it is to be preferred to elective, which would ever be productive of intestine Feuds and civil Commotions, to the total subversion of all Order, and good understanding among the People; as, heretofore, between the Houses of York and Lancaster. For, as Kings, in our days, are mere Cyphers, who have scarcely a power to act of themselves, being directed in all they do, in State affairs; so they are not downright pigheaded; but possessed of good Common sense, a good Heart, susceptible of Feelings for the welfare of the People; having Judgment sufficient to distinguish Truth from Falshood; to listen to, and prefer the good advice of their Council, to their own Humour, little more is requisite to the Character of a good King; having these Qualifications, he is fit to be at the Head, though not absolutely to govern a generous and spirited People; they may, at least, be content, though not happy.

In various conversations which I have had on these subjects, I have generally observed, that, those who have been fortunate, in business or otherwise, and are more indebted to that fickle strumpet, Fortune, than to their own superior Merits, for enabling them to drink their bottle of Wine after dinner, without regarding the expence of it; being satisfied with their situation, and not feeling any inconvenience in paying the Taxes imposed on them, by Government, are (*una voce*) desirous that things may continue as they are, as long as *they* live; paying no regard to Posterity, although they have several Children; fearing that, if measures are changed, *they* may not be quite so well provided for, as at present; and imagining, that all who have Property would be plundered of it, by the rabble; who, being unrestrained, by Law, would think themselves justified in it, to reduce all to a level with *them*. What mean, abject, and sordid notions; do they find that to have happened in France? None, I am of opinion, at least who think rationally, have any such notions of levelling; but only, to reduce those whose Estates are enormous, and divide them, more equally, amongst the younger branches of their Family.

These, very gravely, and full as wisely, advise all who are dissatisfied with the mild Government they live under, to go where things are more to their minds, to America, or to France. They may find, too soon, *that* to be the case; when they shall find, to their loss, that it would have been as well, if better provision had been made for them, here. Others, more violent, are for turning them out of the Kingdom; transport them, I suppose; some would have them hanged up, to sea-son, or, give them a quietus, on the point of a Bayonet. These are such as owe their subsistence to some lucrative Place, under Government; and surely, it cannot be a bad one, which has provided so well for *them*. I shall only add, that, respecting such, if it affected none but them, it is a pity, but that, all who have *too* much reason to be dissatisfied were to quit the Kingdom; they would soon relax somewhat of their severity, and would be glad to contribute some portion of *their* gains, to induce them to return, to the enjoyment of a much milder Government than they left.

AN
ENQUIRY
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PRESENT ALARMING
STATE OF THE NATION.

SINCE the reign of Egbert, or the Norman Conquest, that England has been blest with sovereign Monarchy, never King began his reign with greater eclat, or had a finer prospect of a happy and glorious one, than the present, GEORGE III. Blest with the love of his People; and, although his royal Virtues, had never shone very conspicuously, so neither were his Vices predominant. He was rather of a placid and amiable disposition; not addicted to the follies and extravagances which Youth, and the flattering prospect of a Crown are too apt to inspire, in young minds, being allured by, and elated with the flattery and adulation of court Sycophants; of which, there is, at present, a striking contrast. If there were any constitutional defect, it was that of being too supine, and domestic; qualities better suited to the character of a private Gentleman than a King. The loving and tender Husband, the fond indulgent Father, the kind Master, &c, are very amiable Qualities, in any man; and, as such, have been extolled and magnified in a superlative degree; as if they were the greatest, the *chief* qualities of a great King; which are often possessed, in a much higher degree, by the Peasant in his homely Cot; and are, in him, virtues highly commendable. Qualities of a more extensive and exalted kind should adorn the King. He is stiled the Father of his people; and, as such, his love, or his care, at least, should be extended for their good and happiness, over his whole Dominions.

Family attachments and connections should have no bias, no weight or influence, when put in the scale with it. The Character of a King should be almost divine; and, next to the Deity itself, act only for the general good of the whole Community; and not for a few individuals, only, whither in or out of his own Family. A King should have no other bias for his benevolence, than the worth and real merits, whether personal or acquired, of the possessor; he should regard the Virtue, not the Man.

Whatever great Qualities, or Wisdom, his royal Great grandfather was possessed of, for which our wise Forefathers, grand and great grandfathers, placed him on the Throne of England, (which doubtless were great and conspicuous) it is rather to be lamented, that they could not be made hereditary, as well as the Crown. But, if we may be allowed to form an opinion of that, from the pindaric Odes of Dr. Wallcot, they have degenerated in as great a ratio, as Taxes and Corruption have increased, since the commencement of his Reign; that ever memorable and glorious Æra to England. His royal Father was allowed to possess a great share of both; as the pure and unfulfilled streams of the Blood-royal, which has flowed down, in the royal veins of his numerous and illustrious Progeny, evinces; and entailed, in an eminent degree, on the present most gracious and wise King. But, as Kings are Men, we should not look for more than man from them; yet, methinks, when raised to that high station, when the happiness of millions depends, in a great measure, on them, something more than mere man should distinguish and denote them worthy of so exalted a situation: as Father of his people, his fatherly care should be exerted for their welfare, or he is unworthy of that high Title.

Most truly deplorable is the situation of Kings; how little to be desired or envied is their high station; which, of all other, a wise man would fly from and avoid; and which, indeed, seems to be the real cause, so very few of them being overburthened with that ingredient. They are wholly without Friends, and excluded from all social communion with mankind. Can the lust of power be so predominant in Man, as to make any man look on a King with envy? alas! they are truly pitiable; their superior station only rendering them more superlatively miserable than the rest of mankind. How few among the great and potent Emperors of Rome excite our envy? instead thereof, we look on the greater part of them with horror and disgust. Who would wade through such a sea of Blood, as the first and best of

them did, to sleep on a bed of Thorns ever after? And yet, such is the depravity of Man, that rather than not be the first in power, he will submit, not be content, to be the last, or the least happy of all; for surely, not to have a Friend or an Equal, with whom we can be on a familiar footing, and hold free and unrestrained converse, in a friendly and social way, cannot be esteemed as a state of Happiness.

But, a truce with these reflections; I took not up my Pen to moralize, but to speak of the flagrant depravity of the Times, of the Government, and of Mankind. With all the flattering hopes of a happy reign, how short is the amount, of what was expected from him. Unhackneyed in the vices of a Court, he set out with every promising expectation, to himself and to his people. Apparently blest in a Consort, as domestic as himself, their prime of life seemed to pass and glide away in perfect bliss, in each other; and, the produce of it, in a numerous, hopeful progeny, fully evinces it. Happy Nation, happy King; no fear of a want of Heirs to fill the Throne, with all the Glory, all the Wisdom, which each illustrious Prince inherits from the royal stock; descending from their Ancestors in all its purity and perfection.

But we must bid adieu to those happy days of connubial bliss and conjugal felicity, spent in amorous dalliance, and in the Nursery; where every little Jewel's head was beset round with Brilliants, on Pin's heads, set in gold; and well they might, what wonder? forty thousand Pounds a year might do much *greater* things*. Thrice happy pair, born for each other, loving and beloved; pity to disturb your sunshine, tranquil state; but, other scenes, other cares await ye. They are now grown up to manhood, and must be provided for, in a manner suitable to their high rank and dignity; no matter who pays the piper. The Public is a large field; which, though well drained, is not quite exhausted; and though fainting with loss of Blood and Treasure it is become somewhat sterile, it is not quite barren; another Harvest may yet be reaped from the hard earned gleanings of Industry; yea, from Penury and wretchedness, with the friendly aid of a pliant, venal Parliament, and Ministry acting in concert, and in perfect harmony.

* Forty thousand Pounds a year was settled on the Queen, at first, by way of Pin-money; but that being inadequate (she proving so very prolific) it has, I understand, been augmented to a hundred thousand. What a Sum! It is, very nearly, 274l. per Day; which would keep a large family comfortably, genteelly, a whole year. There can be no doubt of its being made liberal use of; fine gleanings in England, where Money grows;

WE will pass over a few years, and come at once to that glorious Æra, which marked the reign of George the third, of ever glorious memory; and will be handed down, as such, to latest posterity. That Event which (it is said) was presaged, or predicted, by the brightest gem, or jewel, in the Crown, falling from its exalted station, though imagined to be firmly fixed there: Heaven avert the omen. But, such is the instability of all human affairs; one Jewel was restored to its place, the other, of which it was but a type, totally lost, to England, never to be restored again into her motherly lap, and fostered under her nurturing Wing; for which (using a trite phrase, from Milton) we may thank Adam, and the Patriots of the day, the OURS; who were remarkably assiduous and industrious to render every effort of Government, in that contest, abortive of the end aimed at; and who (no thanks to them) may thereby have been the unmeant cause of the most solid and substantial blessing to their Country.

That stigmatized, that odious and unnatural Rebellion, which was fomented by the Minority, has proved a glorious, an unintended, and unexpected Revolution. Brave People; they were compelled to what they did, and the event was LIBERTY, without Taxation. How many thousands were cut off in their prime of life, by that unnatural War? whose Blood was spilt, the Treasury was exhausted, and the vitals of a generous Nation drained almost to the last drop, in supporting a wanton, an unjustifiable, and ill-concerted War, with our best Friends. And for what? Why, because they would not submit, tamely, to have their Pockets rifled, and their Property taken from them by rapacious Harpies, who prey on the vitals of their miserable Country; on the industrious Mechanic, and on the laborious Poor, reveling on the spoils of misery. And what would the success have availed England? Would the People have been eased of the unsupportable burthen of Taxes, by thrice the number of people taxed? Not a Shilling, but rather taxed more, to pay the expence of collecting it. Who, then, would be benefited thereby? Why, a few Court-dependants, only, who are ever gaping for the Loaves and Fishes; with which, were every fish a Whale, they would never be satisfied. There were enow ready to devour America, as others do England; to say nothing of the Nabob-hunters. in the East.

But surely, the Money thus squeezed from the People, in Taxes, under the specious pretence of necessary supplies to Government, is not squandered on Drones, that are useless to the Community; they must merit it from them. Undoubtedly; being men of the nicest Honour, they would scorn to receive it, if they were not conscious, that their good Offices highly deserve it. Are they not always ready to vote for the Minister, who ever he be, when there is occasion to levy fresh Taxes, to save them and the Nation from destruction? Are not the great Placemen, and truly noble Pensioners, who fill the high offices of the State, useful thereto? Is it not for the dignity of the Nation, to have such Places filled by the first Nobility, Lord, Earls, and Dukes? What could be done without a Master of the Horse, and Keeper of the Stag hounds, Rangers of the royal Forests, Lords of the Treasury, of the Admiralty, and of the Bedchamber; Groom of the Stole, or Stool, Mistress of the royal Wardrobe, &c. &c.? Is not such a fine string of them an Ornament to the Nation? Do they not strengthen the hands of Government, and render the Crown stable, and permanant on the head of each hereditary successor? then, are not they *real* Blessings to the People, in securing to them a King, from the most illustrious houses of Hanover and Brunswick Luneberg? How then can the money raised, by the sweat of the Poor, be better applied?

Can any person be so sordidly minded, as to grudge the most noble and magnanimous Duke of Richmond, whose Veins are filled with the richest of royal Blood, his small pittance, which is not estimated at quite twenty-five thousand Pounds a year, yet; arising from the Coals imported at London? a mere trifle of a shilling per Chaldron, on all the Coals burnt in London, and 50 miles or more up the River. Who feels the loss of such a trifle, extorted from them, or can grudge it?—considering the reasonable price of that necessary article. The sweepings and dirt which the Poor buy cannot affect *them* much, as they buy so *very* little; and when they contemplate, in their smoaky hovels (rendered worse by such refuse) on his many rare and princely Virtues; who saves no expence (to the nation) in fortifying the Arsenals; burying such immense quantities of Stone and Iron under ground; were it is of as much use as in the Quarry, or Mine, from whence each was raised, and has lain perhaps from the Creation; and might as well have lain there, to the end of Time. Besides employing a vast number of Artificers, Mechanics, and La-

bourers; and, above all, so many pretty Fellows, all in blue (formerly scarlet) faced with black, with Epaulets and Hangers, called Engineers! who I say, can 'grudge him so scanty a compensation, for his labour and assiduity, in addition to his pay, as Master of the Board of Ordnance? But, above all the rest; when they reflect on his benovolence, and consider what a large quantity of Coals he gives every Winter to the Poor, and particularly in severe frosty weather, out of his gleanings from that bituminous dirt, they cannot fail of being as warm, and as profuse, in their blessings on his benevolent heart, as they are made by his charitable Donations; praying Heaven to double his so *greatly* merited stipend. But, thanks to indulgent Providence, Winters have been much milder of late years, than formerly; insomuch that, they do not need Fires, and consequently do not want Coals; so that, they are happy in saving, to him, so large a share of his Pension,

Gracious Heaven! Is it for no better purpose, then, than that a few, comparatively, may live in greater excess, gorging themselves with every luxury of it, that the Nation is so taxed, from the sole of the Foot, to the crown of the Head? while thousands of wretches are groaning under the oppression, starving and penniless, without Bread to eat, or a Bed to lie on! and, whose only hope of relief from it is in Death. Dreadful alternative. When I ruminate on these things and reflect on the difference, in situation, between one Man and another, creatures of the same species, I can scarce refrain from accusing Providence of partiality in its dispensations, and the distribution of its blessings to the human race. Surely, I think, this cannot be the effect of infinite Wisdom! that one shall be doomed, and, as it were, destined, from his birth, to penury and want, while others are wallowing in ease and plenty, unearned, and unmerited. When I compare the Prince, or the Peer in his Palace, feasting on the most sumptuous and costly viands, served up in gold and silver, and arrayed in gorgeous apparel, with all the ensigns and trappings of state, such as Stars, Garters, and Ribbands, (Baubles; mere state pageantry) and the Peasant in his hovel, starving in a land of plenty; with nothing but Rags, swarming with filthy vermin, to cover, barely, not to screen him from the inclemency of piercing cold; and almost, if not entirely without food to nourish him; not sufficient to relieve him from the gnawings of hunger, for a while, without raking the kennels of the streets, for what he can find, that he can turn into specie, to buy

him bread, and linger out his wretched existence. The ideas which such a contrast creates in me, almost make me conclude, that, either Providence is asleep, or there must be a manifest difference between them, in the sight of the Deity.

Good God! think I, are not these equally candidates for eternal Bliss, in another life, after this? (from whose bourn none ever returns); they doubtless are; why then this difference between them in this life? There must be somewhat inscrutable in the ways of Providence, which no human wisdom can develope. Thanks to the gospel Dispensation which has placed future happiness more within their reach; it is some consolation to the Poor, when it is asserted, that it is easier for a Camel to pass through the eye of a Needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven." This is a dreadful denunciation, and cannot surely be meant literally. I am inclined to think, and believe, that there must be some mistake, here, some error in the translation of this Text; of which, the rich and the learned are well convinced; for who would covet Riches, or could enjoy them, on these Conditions? Those who are in possession of wealth seem not to be much, if at all, affected by the express tenor of that text; or they must be assured that it is not to be taken in a literal sense. They must have found out, and are convinced, that what, in the original language, is interpreted a Needle, does also signify some other utensil, or thing, in which there may be a possibility of the thing being done; in this there is none; so that, by it, as it stands, a rich man is, totally, positively, and *bona fide*, excluded from that state of bliss; as nothing less than certain knowledge of the error, in the translation, or a firm belief that the whole is mere policy, or Priestcraft, calculated to make the Poor swallow the bitter potion allotted them, in this life, without demur, though not without repining; but, quietly submit to their wretched, hard fate, in full certainty of a greater and more glorious reward in that future state, where there will be no repining; where they shall shine with more transcendent lustre, and as much eclipse those who look down on them, here, as the superior light of the Sun does that of the Moon. And it may add to the happiness of some; that the rich, who treat them with such contempt here, shall be shut out, wholly excluded from Heaven, and the society of Angels and the spirits of just Men, like themselves, made perfect.

BUT, I beg pardon for this digression; I am got to moralizing again, insensibly, when I meant to expatiate on the

state of the Nation; which is blest with a Constitution that is the glory of it, and the envy of the World. Governed by a mild and most gracious King, who makes the happiness of his People the sole object of his attention and regard; disdaining to live in luxurious extravagance, at their cost; contenting himself with little, if any thing, short of a million Pounds, sterling, per year, to support the dignity of his high Office, for the honour and credit of the State; while all the great Offices of it are paid by the People, exclusive. From such an example of self-denial set to the Nobility and opulent Gentry, do they not, one and all, copy after the example of their royal master, in the economy of their household affairs, and the frugal economical management of their Estates; lest they should, also, become a burthen on the People, and be obliged to accept a Pension, or some lucrative Place, which might disparage their Nobility. Are not the royal Virtues of economy and self-denial inherited and practised, most conspicuously, by the Prince of Wales, and the Dukes of York and Clarence? Has not the Prince of Wales proposed, and is content to live on the small stipend of 10,000l a year, rather than lay an additional burthen on the People, and suffer Parliament to pay his Debts again, which, so lately released him from a state of bankruptcy? when he either did or proposed to part with his fine stud of Horses, to pay his Creditors; and is now, willing to live as a private Gentleman, for the same most laudable purpose. Exalted Prince; what an ornament to the Nation, and a pattern to the Nobility. But, surely, Parliament will not suffer it; they cannot, they *must* not so disgrace the Nation, and sully the honour of the Crown, by such debasement of the Heir apparent. How will his royal Father, yea, and Mother too, be grieved to the soul, to have any additional weight laid on the People, for the misconduct of any part of his Family; he never will suffer it; but refuse his royal Assent to the Bill if it should be attempted. How was he irritated against the Prince, before, for his imprudent conduct; and although he was apparently reconciled to him, soon after it was settled, yet, to be so soon in the same situation again, will make the wound bleed afresh, and renew his former sorrows. No, he cannot submit to it; but will rather spare it from his own scanty Allowance, than the People to pay it again. Has not the Duke of York, also, given specimens of equal economy and prudence? Did he not part with a fine Estate and House, in Yorkshire, value 90,000l. to pay a just Debt, of honour (contracted in a few hours)? on which occasion, a foolish Carpenter, being reproved by

his Master, and cashiered was drowned; in diving for fishes (no Loaves there) in the Serpentine river, Hyde Park. Did not his Royal Highness display great prudence in casing, mutilating, making additions, finishing to his own taste, and sumptuously furnishing a fine large House, by the Horse Guards, at a very great expence, and scarcely compleated, when he exchanged it for Milburn House, Piccadilly; a situation by no means comparable with the other? Rare Virtues; are we not more than blest, in such a remarkably hopeful Progeny?

And yet, notwithstanding these fallies and levities of Youth, we may have as great, and as wise a King, in GEORGE, the fourth, as in the *third*, who had no such irregularities. It is a trite saying, that reformed Rakes make the best Husbands; yet, I must say, that I think it is rather a desperate risque, which no discrete Woman would venture on. But, have we not a Case exactly in point, a Precedent in Henry V. who, when Prince of Wales, was most profligate and abandoned? Yet, he was no sooner placed on the Throne of his Ancestors, than he forsook his former course of life, and all his profligate Companions in vice; and became, at once, an ornament to the Throue he filled. He, too, raised Contributions on the people, to supply his Extravagances; though in a very different manner; disdaining to receive it from them, as a favour, he demanded it; and if refused, he *took it, vi et armis*, risking his life in the attempt, like a Man of *true* honour; not, meanly, submitting to beg it of them, and thank 'em for their charitable Donations to him; and which, I dare say, his Royal Highness would also disdain to do.

AFTER all the high sounding eulogiums on the excellence of the Constitution of England, the People are yet to learn in what its peculiar excellence consists; or they are rather of opinion that there is none; or, that Government, has so far departed from the letter of it, as entirely to have lost sight of the true purport of the Constitution; and therefore, never think of having recourse to it, on any occasion, or emergency whatever; as being well assured, they will find no sanction, from it, for their longitudinal as well as latitudinal excursions. The Constitution having been so hackneyed of late years, and consequently must be so much out of repair, that it is feared there is but few traces of it left, no part of it entire, and scarcely an original feature in it, to recognize it by. No person doubts that the wheels of Government are much out of order. Even, Mr. Burke, that, heretofore flaming Patriot, allows it; and gravely asks, how

it is to be amended, without endangering that excellent Constitution, by which, Government is empowered to act. Of what use then is a Constitution, but to set them right, when, inadvertently, or designedly, they have departed from the spirit and tenor of its Injunctions? I am in no doubt, that, if Mr. Burke's Eyes were cleansed of that yellow Dust, which has, of late years, been thrown into them, he would yet be clear sighted enough to point out a remedy, without endangering the Constitution. But if it be much out of repair, and wants amending, or altering (for, wise as our forefathers are allowed to be, and doubtless were, in forming a Constitution for succeeding Generations, as well as for themselves, they did not foresee, that the same Constitution, which suited them might not suit equally their Successors, to ten or twenty Generations to come; or, if they did, they acted as arbitrary Despots, in attempting to bind their Posterity against their wills, as being repugnant to their true Interests) the remedy is in the people, and in them only; not by petitioning Parliament (which represents a small share of the whole) but by a national Convention, a distinct body of Representatives of the whole People convened for the purpose; who know not, nor have any thing to do with Parliament but to order them to find, and lay the Constitution before them.

It is, generally said, and understood, that this excellent Constitution of ours consists in forming a Government of three Estates, which might be as a check, and restraint on each other; as, of KING, LORDS, or BARONS, and COMMONS. I have never yet been able to find out, and would gladly be informed of what use the two first Estates are, and whence they originated? for surely, there needed no such check on the Commons, who were amenable to the People, by whom they were chosen, and whom they represented; and, consequently, from whom, all their power to act, in making Laws, for the salutary purposes of Government, was derived, and delegated to them. If the Commons are, as they *ought* to be, the Representatives of the People, they would (I should imagine) be adequate to whatever trust the People reposed in them; but if they are not *entirely* biassed, a majority of them, it is said and believed, are always influenced in favour of the other two Estates. No prudent man would deliberately continue to play a losing game, against two to one odds; and yet, that, supposing the Parliament not biassed, is the real case, in the three Estates. When a Bill is formed in the lower House, it is then sent up to the Lords, for their concurrence; which, if they approve of, it is well; otherwise it is sent back, to be amended, or altered to their liking;

which done, it is then offered for the Royal assent; that being given, it becomes a Law, under sanction of all the three Estates. But who ever knew, in our days, the Royal assent withheld, when a Bill had the concurrence of the Lords? or, that it was ever given without their concurrence? Of what consequence, then, is Parliament? and, of what value is the Royal assent? What a farce is all this formality and parade; are not the two superior powers hereditary? and, the second created by the first? consequently they are Creatures of the first creative Power, and very rarely dispute its authority or oppose its will. It is all as plain, and clear to be seen as the noon-day Sun, by those who choose to see, and are not willfully and obstinately blind; with such, there is no reasoning; the Light of Heaven cannot illumine their minds, to see what makes against their Interest; although, every *disinterested* person sees and acknowledges the truth of the premises.

The third Estate, that is, the Commons, or Parliament, is called (ironically, I suppose) The REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE. What People do they represent? Can they be said to represent the Nation? the whole body of the People, who are chosen by a few, comparatively! And (excepting the County Electors) the much greater part of those are men of little or no Property, compared with ten times the number who have no choice, or vote for this representation of the People. I have the great honour to be a Burgess of two Borough Towns; one of them as rotten (as they are emphatically called) almost, as any in the Kingdom. There are, on the whole, about 150 votes, not above 50 or 60 reside in the place; and who, taking away half a dozen from the number, are not, altogether, possessed of 1000l; as many residing out of it, little more, nor the whole place worth ten times that sum; and yet, this rotten Borough, this miserable place, is of equal consequence, in the choice of Representatives, as the first City (save London) in England; or with the whole County, the largest in England. Few of the Electors, I fear, regard the merits, the principles, or the qualifications of the Candidates for their choice; but the ability only, and his disposition to reward them for it, afterwards, and which is always done (as a security for their success at the next Election) is their chief consideration, and his *best* qualification. It follows, of consequence, that, if such paltry Boroughs have the greatest share in the choice of Representatives, they may be said to be self-elected; for he who has the heaviest Purse, and freely empties it, is sure to be the successful Candidate.

To what purpose was Mr. Sawbridge's annual motion in the House, to shorten the duration of Parliaments, and obtain a more adequate representation? Why, to gain popularity to himself; he could have no other view in it. He well knew that it would avail nothing, as to the effecting it; nay, I question if he, himself, were serious in it, had it been, seriously, taken into consideration by others. It is not to be expected, that any body of men should divest themselves of Privileges, by which themselves are, in any wise, benefited; nor do I conceive that it is in them to do it, any more than it is to continue it for a longer time. If it be contrary to the Constitution, why is not the Constitution consulted on the occasion? But if there be none, or whether there be or not, if it be not with the approbation and consent of the People, it is with them, and in the People, only, to redress it themselves, and remedy the evil complained of. I am not clear, that, in this adequate representation, so much talked on, if the qualification of the Candidates makes a part, and included; which, I think an essential part. I mean only, as to their independance; that is, that they are (*bona fide*) possessed of, at the least, a thousand Pounds a year, or 500 in Land; which is not equal to three hundred, when *that* was first required, and considered as a sufficient qualification. Other qualifications, respecting their Abilities, or mental endowments, is incumbent on their Constituents to be well acquainted with, or satisfied of; as being men of strict Honour, of Integrity, and Probity, which does not come, so properly, under the cognizance of any Law. The rotten Boroughs should be all disfranchised, expunged out of the catalogue of places sending members to Parliament, to which, I freely give my consent; and then, something might be hoped for, respecting an adequate representation, but not otherwise; and who are to do that? Parliament will not add to their number, by giving right to other Places, or to any body of Men, to choose Members, if it can; then, it must be done by the People, and by them, only, will it ever be done.

And now, methinks I hear the cry of thousands, full-mouthed, against me. What! would I take away their Right, because I am willing to give away my own. Have a little patience, my fellow sufferers; I would neither take away *your* Right nor give away my own; but I would restore to every Man the right he is deprived of, unjustly, and unconstitutionally deprived; for, as every Individual pays his quota of Taxes' surely, each has an equal claim to the

choice of their Representatives. Why should the privilege of choosing Members be vested in any place in preference to others, of far more consequence? Are any of the little paltry Boroughs to compare with Birmingham, or Manchester? They are not equal in value with many Villages; a hundred of them are not of equal value with either of the above mentioned places, in which are many of great Property; yet, unless they are Freeholders, or are Free-men, in some borough town, have no voice for the Representation.

By the Parliament, that is, the Commons, is understood the People assembled, to debate on the Affairs of the Nation; to determine on the necessary supplies, for the current expences of the State, according to the emergencies of it; and to settle the manner of raising, or collecting it, with the least expence, and in the most equible mode that can be devised; that each may contribute his quota, in proportion to the Property he is possessed of, or ought to do. Now, as it is not possible this can be applicable, individually, in a populous large State, it is done virtually, by Representatives; that is, by a certain number, chosen by the People, such as they know and can confide in; men of approved integrity, collected from all parts of the Kingdom, in just proportion, as near as possible, to the degree of population in each County. Can any person say, or conceive, that the choice of these Representatives should be vested in a few, comparatively, inhabitants of certain Towns, particularly privileged by old Charters? And those places of little or no consequence, nor the Inhabitants men of Property; while many, who have considerable Property, and residing in the same Town, or in the vicinage of it, are not allowed to vote; as being incapacitated, that is, not qualified, not being FREE-MEN, as they are called. A very pretty jest, truly; natives of the same place, and of a family more ancient, and longer resident than any in the place, are not qualified to vote with the rest, some of whom are not known in the Town, seven or eight years back, or less; because they are not *Free-men*. And who, or of what description are those Freemen?

This paltry Borough was, by royal Charter from King Alfred, I think (but, 'tis immaterial) incorporated, made a Borough, and privileged to send two members to Parliament, with other immunities and who shall dispute their rights, now? which right, of voting for Members, is held under various tenures. Some, by Burges's right, as being *free-born*, their Fathers being Freemen, at the time of their birth; others, by serving a regular apprenticeship to a

Freeman (residing in the place) to learn to make a shoe, or shoe a Horse, &c. or some such low occupation. Some are allowed to purchase their Freedom, for 20 or 30*l*. or it is frequently presented to those who have deserved well of the Borough; and particularly, being previous to, and (to serve the purpose of the Mayor and his brethren) on the eve of an approaching, or expected Election; which is, doubtless, *well* merited. Other right of voting, in other places, is by all the Inhabitants, who have resided a Year in the place, paying scott, and lott, as it is called. In some Boroughs, certain houses (I suppose Freehold) are privileged, or qualify the owners, or possessors to vote; yet the Houses are frequently sold, but reserving the privilege of voting for Members. This is the case, and the mode of electing their Members, at Pontefract, in Yorkshire; where, the power, not the right, of sending members to Parliament is vested, I think, in one great, i. e. rich Man, I think a *Pear*; which has been kept until it is rotten. This worthy and noble Peer, previous to an Election, creates as many Votes as he has tenures, enough to make a majority, which is all that is wanted; and these *Sham* Votes, as they are called, are often unknown, in the Town. This is always the practice, there, to the great vexation of those who are possessed of a *just* right, according to their Charter. I shall leave it to my readers to comment on *this* mode of sending members to Parliament, and to justify it, if they can; or to reflect a little on it, and say, whether it does not call aloud for a Reformation, in these matters.

There are some of the rotten Boroughs called *Pot-wallopers*, the right of voting consisting merely and solely in having boiled meat, in their kettle, within a limited time before an Election; equally laudable with the foregoing, though more justifiable and admissible. As for old Sarum, I have no Idea of Members representing that *Place*, not the Inhabitants of it! for I know of none, there; having no remembrance of a single House, on the spot. By these, and several more, equally justifiable means, and modes of electing them, is the great and potent SENATE of England convened; and they are called, in burlesque, The Representatives of the People. According to the first mentioned mode, by Burgefs right (as in the Town where I was born, and where my father purchased his freedom) all the Sons of a Freeman, born, in lawful wedlock, in any part of the Kingdom (although they never saw the place before they go to claim it) are entitled to, and cannot be refused being admitted a Freeman; being of age, and proving his legitimacy, if insisted on. What

hopes or expectation of a reform in those matters can there be from petitioning Parliament, or addressing the King, who are elected by such sinister means, and with little or no legal qualification, many of them? It is, I fear, in vain to attempt it; nothing can be done, effectually, without a more justifiable mode of election be established, throughout the whole Nation; giving, or restoring, to every individual his *just* right to vote in such Elections. Or, as the great popularity of the nation may render it impracticable, for *all* to vote for the great Assembly of it, in Parliament; it seems, to me, more eligible and consistent, to be done by men of Property, who can better afford to spend some portion of their time, for the good of the whole, than those who have none; and therefore cannot lose their time, without being paid for it; which entirely subverts, the very meaning and intention for which they *are* chosen.

It is of little consequence, respecting the Constituents of such places, who represents, them, their chief qualifications being, as described above. There is indeed another, that I had almost forgot, which is a great recommendation to their favour; and that is, to be very old, so that they may die soon after they are chosen. I remember, when a boy, hearing the people say, that if a man be a hundred years old, when elected there, he would live another hundred. If an Angel represented such, it is nothing to them, who only wish them dead. I am really of opinion, that an old Man would be preferred to a young Deity, by some of them, for no other reason than his age. As an instance how little they regard who represents them, the following may be depended on, as a fact, which happened about twenty years ago. An intimate Acquaintance, and fellow Burgefs, at the eve of an Election, to fill the vacant seat of a worthy man, lately dead; when the son of a Peer, in the minority, made offer of his service. Finding there would be no sport, that is, no opposition to him, this acquaintance, with the concurrence of of two or three more, took it into his head to write to Lord North, then prime minister (although so illiterate a man, that he could not write English, decently, not sense; but had, by success in business, got a little consequence there; not in *that* Borough, but a much better town, adjacent) requesting his Lordship would send some person to offer himself, and they would support him. One was sent down immediately, with whom, his Lordship had some family connection; and who, has, since, made some noise in town. The time was so short, that, although the Letter was sent off express, by a special Messenger, he arrived there but a day,

or two, before the day of Election; so that he had not proper time to canvass, for Votes. I was there at the time, and solicited, but had engaged myself before I left London: Had he gone two or three days sooner, I believe he would have stood some chance; although they knew nothing, nor ever heard of him before. However, he succeeded at the following dissolution; but the other declined, on account of the great expence; nor did *he* sit the whole Session. I fear, this is too much the case, in other and more respectable places, who enquire as little into the merits of their Candidates as my townsmen. Probably, my worthy, patriotic friend imagined (like Sir Francis Wronghead) that he was serving his Country in what he did; the other Candidate was the son of a Peer, and was therefore exceptionable; but what was to be expected from a Creature of Lord North's? He meant to serve the Borough, at least, and that was the same thing to him; for if they had two, the most worthy and patriotic, they would not be satisfied with 'em, but would encourage *any* other, to oppose them.

But, what is most extraordinary; of the number sent to Parliament, great part are not by any choice at all; even of those who are their Constituents. This may seem strange to some, but it is the real case; for instance. Suppose the Members representing any Place, in a preceding Parliament, should die in the interval, or a little before the dissolution; or, for reasons of age or otherwise, choose to decline; it matters not how it happens, but they do not, or they can not serve again, being expelled, perhaps. In consequence, two other gentlemen offer their service, who are but little known in the place, or not at all to the greater part of the Electors; what is the result? Why, if no others offer, they are accepted, and returned, with the Writ, as duly elected. Where is the choice, in this case? I see none; but contrariwise, two strangers are entrusted with their most valuable franchises, to act as they please, without controul, or danger of being called to account by their Constituents, let their conduct be ever so flagrant. No remedy; but, at the close of the Session, to provide two others to represent them, in the next Parliament; yet, if none do oppose them, they are sent again, for seven years more.

This, it is well known, is the mode of choosing, or of sending Members to the British Parliament; which seems, to me, inconsistent, and wholly repugnant to the intention of it. Would we not be induced to think, that, in such case, the Mayor, or other principal man, in the place, who could speechify a little, for the rest (not being, now, divided

into parties, as in a contested Election) would address the strange Gentlemen in this or some such manner? Gentlemen, we have no right to doubt the uprightness of your intention towards us; but, as ye are so little known in this Borough, we hope that you will excuse us, in an affair of such importance, in saying that 'tis not possible we can place implicit confidence, in Persons we know so little of; and, we think that, as Gentlemen, your good sense will allow, that little or no apology is necessary from us, when you are told that we cannot accept of your offered service.—But, do you consider Gentlemen, that the third day, after this, is fixed for your determination, and none other have offered? We cannot be insensible of it, Gentlemen, and if none do, whom we approve, we have this dernier resort; to select two from among ourselves (for we have amongst us some we can confide in); Mr. A, B, or C, would think themselves honoured, in our choice of them, as placing such Confidence in them, in which, we should be unanimous.—But, are these Gentlemen qualified to sit in the House? They have the best of Qualifications, Honour, Probity; and Integrity, and we can only send such as we have.—But, how can those Gentlemen leave their Business and Families, so long, unless they are paid for their attendance, an ample compensation? We do not expect it; if you intend to bear the expence of it, yourselves, we apprehend that you must know of some means of refunding; for why else, should ye think of this, to serve us?—Indeed, Gentlemen, as you cannot dispute our honour, it is somewhat unaccountable, that you should prefer sending two, at your own expence, to us; who, at a proper time, after the meeting of Parliament, mean to convince ye, that we know how to distinguish our stanch Friends. We understand ye, Gentlemen; and, as much as the case requires, we are your humble Servants, &c.

As this is by no means the least justifiable manner of sending Members to Parliament, great part being returned by a small majority of men of no Property, and as little Principle; venal of course; it never entered into their thoughts, how these Men will discharge the duties of the high trust reposed in them; but how they rewarded *them*, for vesting such power in 'em; all that is incumbent on *them* is to make the most of 'em. What, then, have *they* to expect, but that the Members likewise make the most of it, to serve their own private views? These venal electors never enquire on what side they voted, on any public matter, in debate, though of the utmost consequence to the nation; whether they divided with the majority or minority; whether for or against the Minister, it is all one to them; but, what have they done for the Place, to serve the People they represent, in the seven years? which is the chief consi-

deration, and the best recommendation to them, for their support, in future. They seem, to them, as being in the House for no other purpose than to watch over, and guard the immunities and privileges of that Place, the Borough they represent; its Commerce, if maritime, or its Manufactures, if any; without considering that it is immaterial *what* place they represent; that they are a select body of the People, chosen and sent from all parts of the Nation, forming one of the Houses of Parliament; that, which ought to guard the Privileges and Immunities of the whole People; to debate on, and determine for the most salutary measures, by which they must be governed; and subjected to Laws, framed by them for their mutual advantage, not for particular purposes, or but occasionally so; never, when it clashes with the general good of the Community, at large. And it is a peculiar advantage, a blessing indeed, to the People, that so many Gentlemen of the long robe are amongst them; who are skilled in the Law, and proper to assist in framing Laws (with loop-holes, sometimes); for surely, they must know better how to defend their Clients, to guard and protect the Laws, hereafter, which they had the chief hand in framing and devising. Laws that may be wrested to speak one language to serve a purpose, at one time, and a contrary, or very different, at others; such as, with a little cunning may be perverted, and protracted occasionally, to take advantage, from delay; in short, such as may be perplexed and twisted, as may be required; and made to speak whatever language is best suited to serve their own private views, and bring most grist to the Mill.

From the People, themselves, then, and the manner of electing Members to serve in Parliament, it is palpably evident, originated all the Greivances the Nation, at this time, complains of; for, if they neither instruct them how to act, in matters of public concern, nor call them to account for acting contrary thereto; while they, themselves, are venal, and expect to be paid for their Votes, instead of paying the Members for their service, as heretofore; if their conduct be ever so reprehensible, being ever ready to serve sinister views of Government, they are never reproved by their Constituents, but are, after a Dissolution, chosen and sent again, what hope can there be of a Reform? while the mode of electing them, as described above, subsists, it is in vain to look for and expect it; for, when the Root is corrupted and rotten, how can it be expected to bring forth good fruit? It is therefore, unreasonable to think of a reform; to have an adequate representation of the People, those who elect them must be adequate to the trust, men of property and respon-

libility; not obtained either by inheritance or by a servitude of seven Years, to acquire some low mechanic employ to get a livelihood, and be a Free-man; not to be purchased, nor confined to certain Towns, by old Charters, but every Place, without exception or distinction, where there are Inhabitants, who pay scott and lott; wherever Taxes are levied, to be equally free, to vote for the Representation. There cannot, I think, be a greater absurdity, than to inherit or to purchase a right to send Members to Parliament; to the exclusion of others who pay Taxes as well as they, yet have no choice in the representation. Who have the right to sell, or grant such privilege? It is generally the Mayor and a few of the fraternity, forming a Bench, in Borough Towns; who being privileged, by Charter, to send Members to Parliament, have usurped a right also, of empowering whom *they* please to choose them; what right they can or *ought* to have is a matter proper to be enquired into.

AFTER all that has been said and industriously propagated, echoed and re-echoed, concerning the excellence of our happy Constitution, and the great and manifold Blessings we reap from it, between the Church and the State; together with the goodness and salubrity of our Laws (though allowed to be somewhat complicated, and badly executed) we do not find, that either the Americans or the French were at all disposed to copy after it, or to improve on the allowed excellence of our Constitution, though it is *our* glory and the *envy* of the World. Nor, I apprehend, to model their Laws, (the executive part, at least) from ours; subject to be protracted and delayed, by the artifice and chicanery of designing Men; making one thing Law, to day, which does not hold equally, to-morrow; packing Juries, occasionally, at one time, making them reverse their Verdict, another; and (by subornation) to set aside the most valid Evidence, in a Cause of great moment; yea, and give us, from the Bench, as sound Law, that TRUTH may be libellous; and so deemed in some instances, when the Case requires it. Although the Americans were subject to our Laws, and enjoyed the superlative Blessings of our most excellent Constitution, they have wholly rejected, the monarchical and aristocratic part; or, in plain terms, King and Lords; having found, from woeful experience, and from Common sense, that the Representative System, the democratic part, only, is fully adequate, and may be rendered competent to every thing Government requires; and that with less than a fiftieth part of the expence attending ours. Then, in what does its Excellences consist? are we happier, under absolute Authority? not to call it arbitrary; are our

Lives more secure, or is our Property safer, from thieves and plunderers, by Excise-men and Tax-gatherers for ever in our houses? none of which will be the case with *them*; the small stipend required from each individual, knowing it to be for theirs and the common good, and no more than is really and absolutely necessary, each would send or carry his quota to any Office appointed to receive it, without being at the expence of Collectors. And why should they not do so? It is not at all chimerical, but practicable; each Office having proper attendants to send after those who were tardy in their payments, or unable to pay; and, in the first case, to pay for it, if sent after twice; which, as it would be a reproach to them, few would suffer, if in their power to prevent it.

Respecting the French, it will be no compliment to them, to say that they merit the highest encomiums, for what they have done; in the example they have set to all Europe. They are a brave, as they were ever deemed a gallant people. Who could foresee this, when they took part with the Americans, in their glorious struggle for Liberty? But, they caught from them the generous flame, which never can be extinguished; they felt its fervent glow, the genial effects of FREEDOM, having so long experienced the fell and savage effects of Despotism; they had long groaned under arbitrary monarchical Government; and (being driven to it) as if one spirit ruled the whole body, determined to throw off the yoke of Slavery, or perish in the attempt. Dreadful has been the conflict; but, resolution, courage, and manly perseverance has, in the end, surmounted every difficulty, and every impediment; notwithstanding the joint efforts of other despotic German powers, to quash, and reduce them to their former abject state of slavish obedience. And, maugre all that the venom of an hireling's pen, replete with malignant poison, could object to, and write against the measures they had adopted, and pursued to liberate themselves and their posterity, with his prognostications on the Event, all has proved abortive. Yet, this stickler, once, for Reforms, this Patriot of a day, I make no doubt, had rather they had failed in it, and be enslaved for ever, than that he should be proved deficient in his polemic and subtil Argumentation.

Such are the People, whom we have artfully been taught to look on as our natural Enemies; and to bear inveterate enmity, perpetually against them, by continually fomenting broils between us and them (mere court Policy); and, every now and then, to divert the People's attention from other Objects, and for a pretence for adding to the national

Debt, breaking out into open ruptures, in hostile Wars for mere trifles; sinking and burning each other's Fleets, and massacring thousands of harmless, inoffensive people, and all for the GLORY OF GOD; prophanely offering up Thanksgivings to the Deity, for the success of our Arms, after some horrid Massacre, or glorious Victory (the effect is the same); attributing the whole to divine Providence, which, doubtless, directed our hellish Thunder to the destruction of the human species, our fellow creatures and nearest continental neighbours. How have Papists, continually, been blackened, and frequently, with great zeal from the Pulpit (Drum ecclesiastic) as if they were a people accursed of Heaven; and, that it would be highly meritorious and grateful to the Deity (the God of all) to sweep them from off the face of the Earth. Keeping up that idle farce of the Powder Plot; merely a Plot, of that artful man, Ceeil, Lord Burleigh, minister to Queen Elizabeth. Surely, *that* has long been seen through, and ought to have subsided ere this; and not still to prostitute Religion, continually, by keeping the 5th of November as a solemn Fast, and day of Thanksgiving, for we know not what. The credulity of the bulk of mankind is great enough 'tis true; and it may be the policy, as it is the interest of Courts, to keep them in ignorance; but they are now, much less superstitious than formerly; knowledge of their true Interest gains ground apace; the chicanery of Courts is seen through, and will soon be laid open to every Eye, which has the least penetration, into the foxlike subtilty of artful, designing Parasites and Court-dependants. The People have been too hard ridden, and felt the galling spur, keenly. 'Tis possible to ride a free horse to death! but he will wince, when laid on unmercifully; though the People have patiently born much, they are not disposed to bear much more; indeed they will not, they *cannot*; the Iron rod of Power has galled them to the quick, they feel, and may resist its force, and free themselves from its dire effects. The spirit of Liberty is gone forth, and cannot be recalled; nor will it rest, until it regains that dominion which has lain too long dormant.

The Time now offers, and it would be sound Policy to embrace the opportunity of making the French our stanch Friends, and firm Ally; which, joined with America, might bid defiance to all the despotic Powers of Europe; and firmly reunite in the heaven born cause of Liberty, and in extirpating that fell monster War, and Slavery, out of Europe and America, at least; and, as far as european influence

extends, in the eastern World, where arbitrary sway is too predominant: Friendship and social Hospitality will then take place of Enmity, when hostile Sieges and Invasions shall no longer be dreaded. Commerce will unite Nation with Nation; our Ships, no longer afraid of falling a prey to licenced Pirates, will cross the Seas, in safety, on that account; and our Mariners, that brave, hardy, and most useful part of the Community, be no longer in fear of entering their native Ports, after a long voyage, and of being drag'd, like Felons, from their Homes and Families, to serve the King, and fight against those who never did nor meant them the least injury. And for what? They may often truly say, with Major O'Flaharty, in the West-Indian, by Jafus, after all the bustle was over, I never knew what we had been scuffling about; as in the late false alarm when our Fleet was manned and equip'd for action, without knowing on what destination: It might be necessary and expedient, to keep the tackle of the Ships from rust.

When we consider, and reflect on the great expence attending the fitting out, only, a Fleet like that, for action, having lain by some time, useless; one can scarcely be induced to think, that any thing less than the expectation of an actual Invasion, could oblige a Nation, or justify, at least, their entering into a War, though only defensive. But, when we consider the building, rigging, the Guns, and Ammunition, with other Stores, of all kinds, laid in for an Engagement, we can scarcely forbear attributing it to any thing but Insanity, or downright madness, to lay ourselves under the obligation to do it, on any pretence, but as above. As many Guns as the Ships carry, or are pierced for, so many thousand Pounds expence to the Nation, before they are fit for action; and then they are hauled, or sail out of Port (as Mr. Paine says) to try how soon they can be sunk or burnt by the pretended Enemy. This expence is exclusive of building Docks, fitting up and fortifying the Dock-Yards, from hostile Invasions by sea and land; yet, a poor fellow (called John the painter) an hired Incendiary had very nigh laid the first of them in ashes. One of those floating Batteries costs the Nation, that is, the People, at the least, 100,000*l.* exclusive of manning, &c. and perhaps never come twice into real Action; and when they do, if they escape burning or sinking, they must go into Dock to repair, or lie by and rot in the harbour: Indeed, they are not fit for Action, being too large and unweildy. How often had the Royal George, or the Victory (both negligently, almost wantonly and uselessly lost) been in Action?

tion? A quarter of a million, sterling, or little short of it sunk; besides so many lives lost, and particularly in the Victory.

What the destination of the last Spithead Fleet-Armament was, remains a mystery to the People, and what the Cabinet has in view now, is equally mysterious. Whether the Minister was the projector, or it originated in the prolific brain of some deeper politician, the affair was ill concerted; they should have been brought into action, at all events, right or wrong, no matter which, it would have been an Object to fix, for a while, the attention of the People on, and a pretence for another Loan of a few Millions more, attended with new Taxes. They'll manage matters better now, I make no doubt, lest they should not have another pretence for dragging the Ships out of harbour; as our restless, politic neighbours, the French, do not seem disposed to disturb *our* Peace, if we do not disturb *theirs*; for which, I apprehend, we have not, at this time, any *just* pretence, or to molest them in any wise; unless, by way of retaliation, for the official part they took in lending aid to the American Colonies; when we forced them to renounce all allegiance to the Crown, and declare themselves no longer dependant on England. Sooner or later, the event will prove that all was for the best, to all parties; and that we shall all be good friends, uniting in one common Cause, that of Liberty, and the happiness of every individual of Society, without distinction; without contest, other than who can carry the best and cheapest Goods to the others Market. Those will be halcyon days indeed; and, I flatter myself they are not far off; the golden Age, like the Phœnix, shall rise out of the ashes of the iron one, which has had its day, and is now on the decline, approaching, with rapid pace, to its utter extinction.

It is not possible that things can go on for fifty years more, as they have for the fifty past; there would be no Specie left in the Nation; and Taxes accumulating continually, the Budget ever teeming with fresh ways and means for fleecing the People; without regarding where the Money is to be had for paying them, when the Nation is exhausted of that necessary Article. We can neither enjoy the Light of heaven, in our houses, nor artificial Light, by Candles, without paying to Government. We cannot walk the Streets, in Shoes, nor cover our Heads, to screen us from inclement Weather, with Hats, as heretofore, nor keep our fingers ends from the nipping frost, by Gloves, without paying a seventh or eighth part of their value to Government;

so that, my poor hands do, and my head must soon go bare-foot; and shall, before I pay it; being determined to bring Turbans into fashion, in England; and I hope, that all well disposed people will follow the example. Although they have not, yet, presumed to tax Bread, or Beef and Mutton (of which there is no need, being in such hands as renders it hard enough to get) the Beer we drink, though ever so small (and I cannot get strong) pays its share of Taxes, in the articles of Malt and Hops, besides the Excise. Bread, that is Wheat, and other Grain, as well as Beef and Mutton, is sufficiently taxed, by the Landholders, and the monopolizers of Farms. 'Tis said, that strong Beer will be reduced to its former price; it is a good plan, and will rejoice the hearts of thousands, who live on it, as they cannot get Meat, too. It is sound policy, and must make the Minister popular; secure the Mob, by all means; *their* Grievances will all be drowned, in strong Beer.

As for foreign Wines, and Spirits, &c. let the Duties on them be as high as they please, or can bear, so they can prevent smuggling; those are real Luxuries which we can do without, very well; and for those who cannot, or will not, why, they must pay for them, if they can, or *when* they can, so that real *Necessaries* are free. Tea, China, Muslins, Cambricks, and a hundred such superfluous articles, from the East, no matter how high the duties on *them* are, even to a prohibition. Although I like a cup of good Tea, as well as any body, and to sip it out of China, too; yet, I find that I can do very well, without either; and did we cultivate our native sweets maker, the Bees, with more attention, as formerly, we should not, now, pay so high a price for Sugar. I was ever of opinion, that the native produce of every country (being so ordered, by infinite Wisdom) is best suited to the health and constitution of its Inhabitants; and that, the greatest part of our Commerce, with the Eastern world, might be very well dispensed with, and the West Indies too. Honey, I am of opinion is better, and more salubrious than Sugar; and is generally allowed to be so; nor can a sound reason be assigned, I believe, why it should not. Our, home brewed, native Ales, and Beer, I also conceive to be better and more wholesome, for an Englishman, than foreign Wines, or Spirits; except as a Cordial, or Medicine, occasionally, which loses its efficacy, by too frequent use. We are continually exporting our Specie, or silver Bullion, to the East-Indies, and other valuable Commodities; bartering them, in exchange, for Diseases and Death; which

lies secreted in the inflammatory Spices and Drugs brought from India. Even that nauseous weed, Tobacco, an article of such extensive traffic, I am fully persuaded, is rather noxious than salubrious.

Let these be taxed as much as they will bear, when the Revenues want a necessary supply; but let us have Daylight free, with Coals and Candles, at least. There is not, in my opinion, in the whole list of Taxes, so absurd, and so inequitable a Tax as that of Window money; it carries absurdity in the very face of it; as, for instance. A person wants a House, whether for Business or not is immaterial. He may not be conveniently circumstanced perhaps, were he so disposed, nor can he wait the building of one; or if he could, where will he find a place, conveniently situated, to build on? After long, fruitless search, and enquiry after one; wearied with the delay, he precipitately engages one, by no means to his liking, but because he knows of none more so, and therefore has no alternative; all which I have experienced. It was, formerly, the custom, to put three Windows in a House of 15 or 16 feet ~~high~~ front, including the party Wall (but one, then, to each house) where one is dispensed with, now; two is not only sufficient, but the House is much better than with three. Being four stories high, with a light over the door, here are 12 Windows, in front what with Closets, Sky-lights &c; as many more; nor can he block up two, without great inconvenience, much less can he spare five, to reduce the number under twenty; in consequence he must pay 30 Sh. a year to the Government. While, probably, his next door neighbour, on either, or on both sides, has been carrying on a snug yet extensive Trade, many years; or is living comfortable out of business, having declined it, and rebuilt his house to his own mind; and, although he has a front of 21 or 24 feet, does not pay above half or two thirds Window money the young tradesman does, however unable to do it, having perhaps, the additional burthen of a growing, numerous Family. Is there either reason or equity in this? I see none. Would it not be more so, to be laid on the House, according to its value, without regard to the number of Windows? But there is a Tax on the House, already; and what then; does it signify any thing under what name the Tax is paid, whether for the House or the Windows? 'tis the same thing to the House-keeper, who pays it.

But, the greatest absurdity of all lies here. If I be so disposed, or if it suit with my convenience, I can lay two or three windows into one, and, by adding half as much

more light, or nearly double, reduce the Tax on me, considerably, of Window money; how egregiously absurd is this. But, that is connived at; because the large windows in a Nobleman's house, each of which has twice or thrice the area of a common window, pays no more on that account; nor more than two Shillings a Window, equally with all above twenty five. To have made this barely an equitable Tax, they should be taxed and payed for by measurement, of 100 feet square; all within that quantity, being small houses, should be reasonable; being above a hundred feet to pay more, and so, gradually, to any measure, without limit, as to the number of windows. I have often revolved this in my mind, and think it requires amendment, or to be abolished entirely; 'tis a grievous and oppressive Tax, and calls aloud for redress.

To enumerate all that are both grievous and oppressive to one or another, and that are inconvenient, to the bulk of the people to pay, would be as endless as the Taxes are innumerable. The tradesman cannot give a trifling Receipt, but his Customer must wait till he sends for a Stamp, having none by him, at that time; the expence of which, to some, is very considerable, yearly; this is a partial Tax, on tradesmen chiefly. Any one having been robbed, or who has lost something; a Servant who wants a Place, and is destitute of money, in want of Bread, must nevertheless pay something considerable, as well to Government, as to the proprietors of a public paper, for suffering them to make their wants and losses known to the public. Or, if an ingenious person has, with great loss of time and expence invented something, by which, the Community, as well as himself, is likely to be benefited, when made known to the public; and though he has entirely exhausted his finances in maturing it, yet he must pay as much, or more, to the public fund, for the use of Government, as to the printer, to make it known: And, what is a great additional grievance, the number of publick Papers (all which add to the Revenue) renders it intolerable.

To advertize in one or two papers, only, is doing but little; and to do it in all is very expensive. Were there but half a dozen, or half a score, some of them appropriated to one purpose, others to different purposes, we should then know where to look for what we wish to be informed of. For example; suppose one for Trade, in general, another for Publications, Books and Nostrums, &c.; a third for Losses and Robberies; a fourth for Servants, or Masters, Apprentices, &c., a fifth for Auctions, and Sales in general;

a sixth for Inventions of all kinds, Plays &c., all under proper regulation; by which, the end designed, by advertizing, would be effectually answered. As they are, promiscuously jumbled together, in all the papers, it is not only a tax on the pocket of the advertizer, but also on the time of those who read various papers, and perhaps without finding what they look for. But that would frustrate the intention of the Financier; whose aim is not the People's convenience, but which way to make the most of them, without bestowing a thought about the conveniency or propriety of it; or how the people digest, so they do but swallow it.

Another very oppressive Tax is that on Sales, by Auction; many of which are the result of real distress. Cruel Laws! Is it not enough that the distressed person loses a third part, perhaps half of the real value, by being obliged to sell at any price, but he must also pay poundage to Government out of it? That on Wheel-carriages, provided it affected only Coaches, and other Vehicles for pleasure, only, the public, at large, would not be effected thereby; but, by extending it to Stage-Coaches, and Waggon, and Carts kept for necessary use, in business of various kinds, it becomes a Tax on the Public; yet somewhat partial. What adds to the grievance of many Taxes, for one shilling or penny laid on by Government, it is frequently doubled, or tripled on the Public, by the retailer of the articles taxed. Saddle and Coach-horses, kept for pleasure, might be taxed, without effecting any but those who keep them; and none but those who can afford it can be justified in keeping them. But, Running-horses and Hunters ought to be taxed triple of the other; as those who keep them sport thousands, at once, on the former; there would be no impropriety in applying part of it to supply the Government. Though it is a matter of doubt, with me, that it would be better applied there; but full as bad, or probably worse; being paid to venal pensioned members of the Senate, as the wages of Iniquity.

BUT, of all the ways for raising contributions on the Public, for the service of Government, none is so destructive, or has a worse tendency than by frequent Lotteries; but, any thing to amuse the People, and divert their attention from the chief Object. Lotteries keep up a spirit of Gambling amongst every class of the people, from the Peer to the Beggar; and a few harpies are licenced to prey on the public; enriching themselves rapidly in a short time. 'Tis seldom that Tickets can be bought for less than 30 per Cent

more than their nett value ; and frequently (when Dame fortune is disposed to favour them) by the high Prizes remaining in the Wheel, they are doubled, and sometimes tripled. The Tickets are generally as a *Douceur* to those who lend their Money freely to Government; the Public pays what price *they* please to set on them.

I know it may and will be objected, and is the only plea that can be urged in favour of it, that there is no compulsion in the case. I grant it; but the Legislators, from a disposition they find in themselves, well know, that the itch for gaming is as predominant in others as in them; who are as well disposed to fleece one another, as to share the public spoils. The general disposition of man is the same, through all conditions and situations in life; and, if any thing can be said, not in vindication of this vice, it must be more excusable in those who have but little, than in others who enjoy a large share of what makes life comfortable, even to excess. Indeed, it may be some excuse for *them*, that, having more than they have real occasion for, it may be indifferent to them whether they win or lose; but I think, that to rob the Public, and making no better use of it, is such an aggravation of the offence, as renders them much more culpable, and cannot be admitted in their vindication.

I shall not be easily induced to believe, that those who play high, sit down, so coolly and deliberately, without an eager desire to win each others money, and carry off as much of it as they can; sordid motive; and it will scarcely admit of a doubt, that, prompted by such desire, they would make much scruple at cheating, a little, not being apprehensive of detection. In which case, I am inclined to think, that a Highwayman is a more honourable Character, who bravely, and to your face, avows his intention is to rob you; and like a man of true honour, risques his life in the attempt. 'Tis scarcely possible, that those who play high can have any pleasure in it, but what results from winning their antagonist's money; barely to come off conqueror affords little, compared with the other. I must own, that it is not quite clear to me, that they would not, if they could, slyly, put their hands into each other's pocket, and help themselves; their Honour would not I fear be greatly hurt, nor their Consciences alarmed at the baseness of it, could it be done with impunity. And for what end is all this done? Admitting that Man could so debase himself; there must be some strong impulse to a great and laudable object, no doubt; nothing less, probably, than to purchase a small favour from some favourite Courtesan; if not to

render infamous a virtuous Woman, whose ruin they have determined on, at any price and hazard.

But surely, these are not Noblemen who act thus; they may be so called; but, such Characters as these can never be admitted into the great Offices, and first departments of the State, and be entrusted with the management of the Public's Money; it must be madness to entrust such Stewards with the management of a large Estate, who give such proofs of their disposition, and most extraordinary abilities in conducting their *own* Affairs. Gambling is become the chief business of the modern Nobility, almost the sole employment of the Great, whose nocturnal assemblies, public and private, are for little or no other purpose; it is the first and almost sole study of their leisure hours; for, if they may be allowed to study at all, dear Hoyle, and such favourite Authors, engross the whole of their attention and regard. The Disease (for it is a species of insanity) is become so general, that few of them escape the contagion; even the blood royal has not been proof against it; the malignant infection is such, that few are entirely free from the odious contamination. Have we not had a glaring instance of its dire effects on the Duke of York, that, otherwise, most amiable and virtuous Prince, a Bishop too? Who was reduced almost to beggary in one Evening, in a few hours. To repair which, did not his Royal Highness immediately embark on a very hazardous expedition on the Continent, on a trip to Prussia? and returned triumphant, in a short time, with a rich Frigate in tow, all lawful Prize, stored with fresh german connections; it was a bold adventure, by which his Affairs were retrieved, and himself for a while, from insolvency.

But, to return to the Lotteries. It is not to be wondered at, that they are so frequent, being so countenanced; and encouraged by all ranks and degrees of the people, from the Peer to the lowest mechanic and day-labourer. On an emergency, to raise Money for the exigencies of the State, when other means failed, a Lottery might be set on foot, managed properly, by Commissioners in trust for, and under the sanction of Government. But never to divide the Tickets into Shares and Chances, almost into hundredth parts; then, none but those who could spare ten Pounds, more or less, would buy, or would be justifiable in buying, from the chance of getting a great Prize; Government making no other advantage of it, than the use of the Public's money, without interest. Nor should the price of the Tickets ever be raised at the Office, nor more than ten

sold to one Person, under the penalty of the Prizes obtained by them being forfeited to Government; the Office to be shut up, after a limited time. No licenced Offices for selling Tickets, making a market and business of it; but Gentlemen, or others, who had purchased, might sell them again, if they pleased; for what they might be deemed worth, by others, according to the Prizes in the wheel. Breaking them into small portions is ruinous, by which it comes within the reach of every individual; by which, the lowest of the people are fleeced of their small pittance, in reserve, perhaps, for some necessary and pressing occasion, by the delusive hope of adding thereto; till the woful event convinces them, when too late to retrieve it, of their error; which has been fatal to some. Surely, they never consider how great the odds is against them; but excuse themselves in thinking that they have as good a chance as the rest, and that some must be lucky; without considering, that the odds against each individual, is more than three to one, that he comes off scot free; or how should all the Office-keepers get rich so soon? Though some of *them* may be unlucky, and fail; but that seldom happens. Would any person, in his sober reason, venture to play against such odds, at *any* game, not being certain that he has the advantage of his antagonist? and if he has, it should be in the same degree, to be on an equal footing with him.

Concerning Insuring, as has been practiced of late years, little need be said. It is too notorious to need *any* invectives against it; 'tis infamous and destructive, ruinous to the midling and common people, for whom it is chiefly calculated. The delusion is kept up by a seemingly fair chance to win, on an equal bett; but, it is not so; the throwing a Die is really equible, to which, those who are disposed to risque the little all they have had better have recourse, one against another, on an equal chance. In the other, they may be assured that the odds is greatly in favour of the Office keeper; who, in the end, is enriched on the spoil of the adventurers; scarcely one in ten comes off wining. The poor labourer is thus choused out of his little all; in the vain hope of increasing his stock; and being rendered pennyless, becomes desperate. If a Servant, in any trust, he contrives means of reimbursing himself, by robbing his master, whenever he can do it with impunity; which, Shopmen have frequent opportunities for. The Apprentice plunders the Till, or keeps all he can out of it; every species of fraud is practiced to support and keep up the spirit of it; and to gratify their disposition for gambling in the Lottery; which engrosses their whole Attention, and

makes them inattentive to Business, till they become remiss and negligent therein. Thus, *that* Government which ought to watch over the predominant vices, and guard the People from all malpractices, that are hurtful to the Community; by holding out Rewards, as a stimulus to laudable pursuits, and exacting Penalties, to deter them from such as are destructive, becomes, itself, the very Instrument, the contriver and abettor of them; to divert their attention from *them*, while they are sharing the Spoils, of which they are plundering the whole Nation.

These and numerous others, equally subversive of good order, of advantage to, and the prosperity of, our well regulated Society, are the blessed effects of our well constructed Government; countenancing, fomenting, and encouraging Vice, instead of rewarding industry and ingenuity, in the Artificer and Mechanic; in proportion to his labour and genius, which tends to benefit the Community; and in in such a manner as may induce them to exert every effort of their skill, instead of damping the ardour of it, and discouraging them by grievous Taxations on the very produce of their labours and inventions; as in the case of Patents, particularly. Can any plausible or justifiable reason be assigned, that a few individuals, in office, should be benefited as they are, by the perquisites of the Office, from the Patentee; not having, in any wise, been instrumental in the production, or completion of the several Inventions? Patents are, seemingly, held out, by royal Favour, as a stimulus to Ingenuity; and should be bestowed, gratis, on each inventor, for a Time proportioned to the merits of the Invention. Many are deterred from aiming to obtain a Patent, themselves, from the great expence attending it; and are obliged to dispose of a moiety to some other person, who can go through with it; sometimes they are necessitated to sell their property in, and claim to it, entirely; so that another person reaps the fruit of their ingenuity. Nor does the grievance end here, for he must also pay to Government, for the privilege of making the Invention known to the public; all which exactions have a tendency to suppress and render abortive the talents and genius of Society.

It seems almost unaccountable how the lower class of mankind, in general have imbibed such abject and slavish dispositions, as are derogatory to the dignity of human nature; which debases and levels Man almost with the Brute, or but little superior: And yet, when we reflect a little on it, 'tis not very difficult to account for. They have,

from their infancy, been taught to pay obedience to, and to look on those who are born to roll in plenty; or (being the favourites of fortune) have been so successful in the affairs of the World, as to be enabled to live in a superior stile, and therefore, are deemed their Superiors; and expect to be treated by them, at all times, with distant respect, if not abject servility. And they are particularly enjoined, in the church Catechism, and in various places in the liturgy of the Church, as by Law established, to pay all due respect to their Superiors; how are they known to be so? to love, honour, and obey the King, and all who are put in Authority under him; without any proviso, as to their being found worthy of it; but, to submit themselves, *lowly* and *reverently*. By which, and by every other means, tending to keep the lower class in a state of slavish dependance, the mind is become so habituated to it, so debased, as not easily to be raised; but to look on and treat them as their Betters, as if they were a superior order of Beings, and not of the same species with themselves; to whom, they are, frequently, and, in many respects, greatly inferior. In earlier times, the Peasantry were Vassals to, and dependants on their Lords, the Barons of the realm; which vassalage consisted in tilling their lands, and, occasionally, in fighting their battles against their ambitious and quarrelsome Neighbours, who frequently made incursions on each others Demesnes; with which, history is replete. But, although nothing of this remains, in our days, the small Farmers, scarce a century back, were more in subjection to their Lords, or Landords, than now; that slavish dependance of the inferior order, on the superior, loses ground apace, and will ere long, be totally obliterated and done away.

Between one man and another, in a state of nature, there is no such distinction; nor does it seem to be consonant with, but repugnant to reason, and the nature of Man, that one should be subservient to another; otherwise than as social Beings, mutually assisting each other, and returning acts of kindness, reciprocally. All are born alike, and all have an equal claim to happiness in a future state; why then such difference here? It is not at all necessary, for the general welfare of the whole, but only of a few. Will any person say that it is consistent with the moral fitness of things, founded in infinite Wisdom, that one man should be born to enjoy every comfort, every luxury the world can afford, in the most luxurious profusion; others to slavery, to want, and misery? Yet, that is really the case, according to the present state of things; and such the Con-

stitution has provided for and established, by the law of Primogeniture; a perpetual succession of hereditary Superiors. From which aristocratic system originated all the Grievances, with which, the bulk of the people are burthened, by perpetual Taxes; continually accumulating, without hopes of redress. And may they groan under it, to the end of their lives, and intail a greater load of misery on their posterity; if their abject souls be so debased as to bear, tamely, the insults of Insolence, to be treated like Dogs, spurned at and kick'd the more, while they fawn on their lordly Tyrants. Forbid it Heaven; what! will ye look supinely on, and see Fetters forging for ye, yet suffer yourselves to be shackled by them! * for shame!—arouse yourselves from the lethargic stupor, in which ye seem entranced, or may ye be for ever fallen.

It has been found necessary to enact Laws to prevent Monopolies, particularly of Corn, or Grain; which are not, I fear, duly enforced, so as to prevent Regraters from forestalling that most necessary article of life. At the same time, there subsists a Law in favour of the greatest and most hurtful to the Community of all other; a Monopoly of the first magnitude, and of the most pernicious and dangerous tendency, in the Law of Primogeniture, that baneful monopoly of Land. By which Law, the whole Nation is parceled out in large lots, amongst a few, comparatively, who let them out again in large Parcels; so that, Farmers are now become Gentlemen, many of them of great property, men of opulence, who are not obliged to send the produce of their Lands to market, to serve the Public who are in want of it; as they can afford to keep and retain it, till the market price suits better with their avaricious views. On the contrary, when Land was let out in small Farms, they were obliged to make the most of every thing, which is disregarded now; and to bring the produce to market, as soon as possible; vying with each other, by laudable and necessary industry, to bring the produce of their Farms to the first market, at a reasonable price, according as the harvest turned out; without entering into combinations to keep it back, in order to raise the market, by an artificial apparent scarcity.

Hence the cause of the present high price of Provisions, in general; the Nobility and opulent gentry have engrossed the Land amongst them, which they let only in large parcels (as above); and thus, a monopoly, in the first instance, is sanctioned by law; nor is it possible that it should ever be otherwise, while such a Law exists; nor will Provisions ever be at a reasonable price, while that Law remains in force; but, on

* For what purpose are BARRACKS erecting, in various places? Are they more wanted, at this time, than heretofore?

the contrary, keep pace with other species of Taxation. Another cause arises from the great number of Horses kept for pleasure, and for state, as Servants are. Heretofore, Farmers used to plough their Lands with Oxen, and make them draw in a team, till a proper time for fattening them, for killing; consequently, less pasture ground would suffice. And, in Towns, almost every Tradesman, keeps a Horse, for his pleasure, though he can scarcely keep his family, decently; to support which, a great quantity of Land is necessary for Hay and pasturage, which might produce more Corn. These are real Luxuries, and a fit subject for taxing, without becoming a general grievance; nor would it be compulsive; those who thought themselves aggrieved, might soon ease themselves of it, and be further eased, of the great expence attending the keeping of horses; and be more attentive to business.

THE grand source of all the grievances and distresses of the People originated in that unnatural, that unjust, and most detestable Law of primogeniture; by which, all the Issue of the Great and Noble are distressed, in order to aggrandize the Heir, and keep up that preposterous subordination between them and others; who are, by nature, equals. This Law, it is evident, originated in Conquest and Tyranny. The Tyrant (who is styled a Conqueror) by bestowing large portions of the Land, he has subdued, conferring Honours, that is Titles and absurd distinctions, on his followers and adherents, and others well disposed to aid and abet the Cause; making them sharers in the general spoil; He thereby strengthened that claim, which was obtained by the sword; and established himself, securely, on the Throne he had usurped. Hence it necessarily followed, that the younger sons of the Nobility were provided for in the Army; and, as the maritime power of England increased, in the Navy; thus, doubly securing the Crown to the Usurper, by having the Nobles, and all the commanding Officers in the Army and Navy secure, in his interest. And thus it has been continued down to our days; so that, by long custom, we are led to look on it as essential in a Government; which, in reality, is all empty pageantry, the traping and mere machinery of an aristocratic one, calculated to muse, to catch and keep in awe, the unthinking, gaping multitude; all which may be very well dispensed with.

The Law, and the Church establishment, likewise provided for a few of their adherents. By filling all the high Offices of the Law with their creatures, of consequence, being dependant on the Crown, the Laws were frequently, and (as now) when occasion required, the letter of it wrest-

ed and perverted, to answer sinister purposes of Government. The dignitaries of the Church were also in their interest; and the most valuable Livings were bestowed on their friends, with Pluralities and Sinecures; while the Curates, who officiate for those Drones, are scarce allowed wherewith to live comfortably, not decently, so as to support and do credit to their function; but greatly to the disparagement of the sacred Order, and of Religion. In the Church, as in every department of the State, the Heads, who do little or nothing, are paid profusely; while the Subalterns of all, who do the drudgeries, and bear the fatigues of the Office, whatever it be, are scarcely allowed a subsistence. But, 'tis peculiarly distressing to see a man, who has had a liberal education, in a threadbare Coat, or shabby, rusty Cassock, and brings discredit on their Profession.

The great Offices of State, indeed, are filled, chiefly, with the Nobility, with Pensions to support the dignity of them; but, of what service they are in it, is not, to me, very obvious; other than to support the Crown on the Head of him who claims, and, with their concurrence, wears it. Thus, the Army, and the Navy, are entirely at command of the King; as all the Officers have their Commissions from him; (but who pays 'em?); the Nobles, and all the state Officers, are also at his devotion, with the Heads of the Church and the Law; what more is needful, to render the Crown secure and permanent? Why, to immerse the Nation in Debt, as much as possible, pledging the Crown for payment of the Interest, only, the Principal being sunk and funded; which is, now, accumulated to such an enormous bulk, as to threaten destruction to the State, or to the present Government; if some remedy be not speedily applied, to ease the People of the burthen of Taxes, to pay the Interest of it; for, suppose the measures which have been pursued, ever so justifiable, it does not make the burthen lighter. Those who are interested in it do not complain; but they are a small share of the whole, and cannot be judges of the Grievance. But, granting that the bulk of the middle class are able to pay the Taxes levied on them, without inconvenience; yet, being well assured, that, to govern the State does not require a fourth part of the money raised annually, three-fourths, or more, being lavished, uselessly, on Placemen and Pensioners, who do nothing for it; I am of opinion, that they must pay it grudgingly, and would rather have the spending it themselves, as they like best; which amounts to something considerable, yearly. Suppose it but ten or twenty Pounds; is there any so unconcerned

and indifferent to it, as to give so much out of his gettings, yearly, for which, he finds he has various occasions, himself? and to those who have already, more than enough; at least, much more than *he* has; and, from whom he has no compensation whatever.

THE enormous National Debt is an object of such stupendous magnitude, as cannot but strike every true friend to Liberty with dismay; who, in his hours of serious reflection, contemplates on it; and considers, that little short of two hundred millions has accumulated in the last fifty years; which is sufficient to convince all but those who are interested in it, and partake of the spoils of their miserable bankrupt Country, of the mal-administration of public affairs, and the measures pursued by Government; which, in so short a time, has reduced the Nation to such a deplorable situation; from which it is, to all appearance, irretrievable. Who can doubt of the excellence of the Constitution, when he sees and feels the blessed effects it has been productive of, in laying such a load of Taxes on the People? not for the current expences of the State, but to pay the Interest of the national Debt; for which, no less than nine millions, sterling, is raised annually. Can any one doubt of the necessity for a Reform? Is it not time that an enquiry be made into, and a stop put to such iniquitous proceedings; or must they go on thus, heaping Taxes on the People for fifty years more, as has been done in the latter half of this 18th Century? I make no doubt but Mr. Burke, and such acute reasoners, can justify the measures, and prove, to demonstration, that 'tis all for the good of the State; but I must own, that I am not blest with such keen discernment, as to penetrate into the deep mystery of it so far, as to perceive, clearly, the truth of the premises; 'tis a doctrine too profound for my shallow comprehension; unless, by the *good* of the STATE is meant, that 'tis best to keep things in the *state* they are; which I cannot acquiesce in.

Gracious Heaven protect us, and defend this apparently devoted Land from Destruction. I have long look'd on Patriotism as a farce, calculated to serve the purposes of designing Men, the Wilkes of a Day. Where is all his flaming patriotism now? he lies snug and quiet in a good Birth, which it procured him, and we hear no more of Mr. Wilkes; no longer is his Carriage drawn by Men, but by Horses; which, of the two, act most consistently. Now is the time for Patriotism to display itself to the greatest advan-

age. Will none stand forth, in the defence of their bleeding Country? about to be immersed in WAR without an Enemy, or any Cause, that I can see, but to amuse and divert the attention of the People from the *grand* object, and for a pretence to borrow more Money. Oh! for a JUNIUS, now; but H. is no more; his Patriotism had its Day, and he rests in peace and quiet. Is it possible that Man can be so debased and depraved? is there none, whose great Soul is superior to the bewitching Charms of Power and empty Honours? No, *not one*; real Honour has fled the Nation, to reside in another quarter of the Globe, and there is none left in this. Not a little Placeman, or Exciseman, who receives the poor pittance of forty-eight Pounds a Year, for serving Government, in its lowest drudgery, but who, (having no better, apparent means of subsistence) will be warm in his encomiums on the mildness, integrity, the humanity, the lenient, and benevolent tendency of the present Government; from which (let it be added to the Litany) *Good Lord deliver us.*

He who can devise an expedient, by which there is a practicability of liquidating the national Debt, in any certain reasonable time, though it were half a Century more, would deserve well of the Community; but I fear, that, unless the tide of Corruption and excess of Luxury, in every stage of life, be stemmed; until a sea of voluptuous dissipation, an inundation of vicious pleasures, which, like a torrent, deluges the whole nation, shall subside, all attempts at a reduction, that is, of abolishing the Debt, will prove ineffectual. There have been attempts at an Union, with Ireland; which would effect but little, if it were so méant; but, if I know any thing of the spirit of that People, the Irish, they never will submit to it. (It was small, comparatively, when the Union with Scotland commenced.) It cannot be expected that they should agree to bear part of our burthen of Taxes, when they are but ill at ease with the weight of their own; a mere trifle compared with ours. I hope, that the example of America will deter us from attempting to compel them to submit to the imposition of Taxes, by the British Parliament: their Customs, and other Revenues, are, already, well loaded with Pensions.

However political it may and has been deemed, to strengthen the interest of the Crown, by Loans from the People; it would have been more justifiable in the two former, than in the present Reign; yet some bounds might have been, and sound policy would have prescribed thereto; by over-

going, I am inclined to think they have rather weakened than cemented it; by an undue tension, by straining the strings of Government too tight, the harmony, which otherwise might have subsisted, is effectually destroyed; and I fear, will not easily, if ever, be restored. The body of the People, on whom the burthen lies heaviest, are (whatever may be imagined to the contrary, by those who feel it not, or are benefited thereby) not able to bear it; the price of Labour not being proportioned to the high price of the Necessaries of life. And surely, it cannot be sound policy to distress the industrious man, the most useful part of the Community, to such a degree as to be insupportable: if *they* are made desperate, being driven to despair, what can it end in, but a total subversion of all legal order? and must terminate in the destruction of the whole Fabric. If the People cannot pay the Taxes, no force can make them; and if they will not, the effect is the same; the Funds must, in consequence, be reduced to so low an ebb, that Stock will be of little value; and, 'tis feared, that the Bank would be hard put to it, to find Specie for a tenth part of their Paper, now in circulation. What can be the consequence? a national Bankruptcy must necessarily ensue; and, Humanity, Reason, yea, Justice dictates, that 'tis better a few suffer, for the present, than the whole be aggrieved and burthened for ever. We have heard of such things, formerly, as dragging obstinate people to obedience; but 'tis rather a desperate expedient, and seldom produces the effect aimed at; and we are induced to think, that the awful and fatal Issue attending such attempt, in France, will be a solemn Lesson to all despotic Kings, in future; not to set up, and put to the issue, their puny, delegated Power, in opposition to, and against the MAJESTY of the PEOPLE, from whom, all *their* Power is derived.

THE ruinous funding System first commenced in England, in the reign of William III. who began his reign in 1688; that ever memorable *Æra*, which placed a Dutchman on the Throne of England; and embroiled us in German Intrigues, to support unnatural, continental Connections, in which we were no way interested. To preserve the empire of the sea, was all we had to do; to protect our Commerce from Pirates, and to defend our Coasts from hostile Invasions. The continental War, in which William was engaged, for Holland, as an Ally to Germany, with Spain, against France, soon plunged the Nation in Debt; and the reduction of Ireland to obedience, against the deposed King (James II) his

Uncle and Father-in-law; sent over and supported by the French King, to amuse us, and draw our Forces out of Germany, contributed not a little thereto. The Money borrowed, in his reign, was upwards of 44 millions; 34, of which, was repaid; and there remained, at his death, a Debt of 10,060,677*l.* saddled on the Nation; which was, then, thought enormous. In our days, we are grown wiser; having greater credit, we borrow, and increase the Debt, continually, but never think of paying, or attempt to lessen it, in time of Peace; but are perpetually augmenting it, and devising means to lay fresh Taxes on every thing that can be devised, and crammed down the People's throats.

Another unconstitutional measure was attempted in the reign of William the third; which was, to keep a standing Army, of 36,000 Men, in the time of profound Peace. This was strongly opposed, and particularly by Trenchard, a great Patriot of that time, who wrote against it; shewing the evil and dangerous tendency of a standing Army. The Parliament therefore, being somewhat stubborn, allowed and provided only for 10,000; and were reduced to 7,000, the year following; by sending back all the Dutch Guards, which accompanied the King to England, and had constantly attended him, in all his Actions; this greatly displeased him. However grievous and burthensome these proceedings might be, and doubtless were to the People, it seems justifiable, or at least sound policy in the King, at *that* time: who had a formidable Rival to the Throne, in the Queen's Father, which has long been extinguished; and consequently, there cannot be the necessity for a standing Army, kept in continual pay, in *our* time. We might have learned an useful Lesson from this continental connection, with Holland; although 'tis said that none but Fools go to the school of Experience; what, then, must they be deemed, who do not apply it's Precepts to a proper use?

Such pernicious and destructive measures, as were adopted in his reign, though it cannot be vindicated, may admit of some extenuation; as it seems consistent with the policy of that time; in order to secure William on the Throne. For altho' his claim was good, and settled by Parliament, he could not be quite at ease, and securely fixed while James was living, and made pretensions to it; as thinking himself unlawfully excluded. Therefore, such precaution seemed necessary, making it the Interest of the People, who lent their money, to prevent any Revolution; and having an Army always ready, in case any large body of the People should revolt from their allegiance to him. Upon the

whole, all circumstances considered, William was not wholly undeserving of his exaltation; for he had qualities superior to many who had succeeded to the Crown of England. The greatest part of his time was spent on the Continent, where he always was, during the Campaign, in summer, at the head of his Army; being engaged with the confederate Powers, on the continent, in a War, in which we had little or no concern.

Restoring of triennial Parliaments was one, if not the most popular Acts of William; although he refused his assent to it, some time. But he had frequent Parliaments; for, he began his reign in the year 1688, and his sixth Parliament met on the last day of December, 1701; he died in March, following. What Charms are in a Crown; every thing but Life, and Interest, are sacrificed to obtain it. He was a true Dutchman; to secure the Crown, to himself, (in conjunction with his Consort) he met his dethroned Father-in-law (his own Uncle) in the field, at the battle of the Boyne, in Ireland, at the head of their respective Armies, the year after his accession. James's Army was greatly inferior, a fourth part, or more, to William's; but, when the Irish Infantry, which consisted of more than half his force, fled from the field of Battle, and left their General prisoner, he shewed great pusillanimity, even to cowardice; for he fled immediately after, to Dublin; and returned to France, again, where he remained as long as he lived; although he had still a superior force to William, in Ireland. The Bank of England was established in the fifth year of William the third, which licenced the coinage of Paper money, as a substitute for Specie; which was, from the beginning of his reign, continually exported to the Continent, and has continued ever since; so that, scarce 20 millions remain now in England, which should be upwards of sixty. The first State lottery in England, was in the same year, 1694; that ruinous and baneful plan for raising money, which was exported from Holland but has thriven so well, since, that England may be thought its native soil.

QUEEN ANN (the second, and only remaining Daughter of James II) it is well known, succeeded to the Crown; which she found encumbered with a mortgage of 10,066,677 £. and engaged in a fresh War, on the Continent; as an Ally to the Emperor of Germany, with Holland, and other States, against France and Spain, now united in the Bourbon family. In which War, the Earl, afterwards Duke of Marlborough, succeeded King William in the command, at the head of the

Army; having Prince Eugene for an Auxiliary, and his great Coadjutor; which War, to the immortalization of Marlborough, and to the impoverishing of England, continued to the last year of her reign. The Grants, during her reign (which was 12 years, and near five months) were, on an average, about 6,300,000 *l.* annually; but, near 39 millions of it was borrowed in the last four years. So that, on the whole, with what was left in arrears, at the death of King William, the national Debt was, at her death, 66,112,879*l.*; a fine increase in 12 years. Both Anne and her predecessor, William, were liberal in conferring Honours. William created eight Dukes, one Marquis, sixteen Earls, three Viscounts, and nine Barons, of England; one Scotch Earl, two Irish, and one Baron; with 36 Baronets, and 14 Knights of the Garter. Queen Anne created seven Dukes, two Marquisses, ten Earls, one Viscount, and twenty two Barons; 25 Baronets, and 14 Knights of the Garter; a plentiful supply of honour. At the death of Queen Elizabeth, there were only 59 Peers, of England; Queen Anne left 158; exclusive of the Bishops, and 16 Peers of Scotland, in all two hundred; which, then, composed the British House of Peers.

By the Act of Settlement, made in the reign of William, 1701, Sophia, Electress, and Duchess dowager of Hanover, was the next in succession to the Crown (being in the Protestant line) after the Princess Anne, and her Issue, by the Prince of Denmark. But, her only surviving Son, William, Duke of Gloucester, died, two days after his entrance into the 12th year of his age, who was a most promising, hopeful Youth; and with him, the Stuart line became extinct; except the Son of James, in exile. The death of this Prince was an irreparable loss to the Nation; the People were greatly affected thereby, and almost inconsolable; altho' they were not, then, truly sensible how great the loss was; as he might, probably, have cut off all further pretensions, from German Despots. In consequence, on the death of the Queen, his mother (and the Electress Sophia, being also dead) George, Lewis Guelph, Elector of Hanover, succeeded her. He landed at Greenwich, on the 18th of September, 1714; and was crowned on the 20th of October.

The Family of the Guelph's is (if History may be credited) of very antient Pedegree, and illustrious Lineage; being descended from Pharamond, king of the Franks; but it may, it is said, be deduced, without interruption, 14 hundred years. Some have traced their descent 600 years before Christ, from the Actii, a noble Family in antient Rome; but, I think it scarcely worth while raking so far into the

ashes of antiquity for. George the first was in the 54th. year of his age, when he was called to sovereign Rule, in England; and his only Son, George II. (who accompanied him) in his 31st. His claim to the Crown was far removed; and, but a few years before, had little hopes of it; there being three Princes and too Princesses, grand children of James the first, who had a large Issue. At the same time, his Mother, who descended from the King of Bohemia, by Elizabeth, eldest Daughter of James, had three Brothers and two Sisters living, all older than her. Notwithstanding all which impedements, George Guelf Elector of Hanover, succeeded Queen Anne to the Crown of Great Britain; the Union with Scotland commenced in 1707. He found the Nation enjoying profound Peace, after having been embroiled, unnecessarily, in a fruitless War, all the preceding reign. But his repose was soon disturbed, by the son of James the second, whose pretensions to the Crown still survived; and occasioned the famous Rebellion, of 1715; which, though apparently formidable, was soon quelled, and tranquillity again restored to the Nation. But, the triennial Act was repealed, on account of that Rebellion, and septennial Parliaments were again established, which have continued ever since.

In 1720 (about the middle of his reign) a Scheme was planned for reducing all the public Funds into one, for reducing the national Debt. It was undertaken by the South Sea Company; which raised their Stocks, to 1000*l.* p. cent. An Act was passed, for the Company to redeem the Debt of *l.* 16,546,482; but, by the fraudulent measures of the Managers, thousands of Families were ruined, by that grand national Bubble. Nothing but Stock jobbing was attended to; and such a variety of Bubbles were set on foot, by various Companies, that the several Sums proposed to be raised, by them, amounted to 300 millions, sterling; which exceeded the value of all the Land in England, at twenty years purchase. This was an alarming event, fatal to thousands; but, whether Government was concerned in the Bubble, or not, I shall not presume to ascertain. But, the Act for prolonging the duration of Parliaments, to seven year., I shall not scruple to assert, was a grand innovation on the Constitution, and an infringement on the liberties of the People; which has proved the source of corruption in the body of Representatives, and of the Nation, in general. Thirty Lords protested against it, as being contrary to the tenor of the Constitution, which required frequent Parliaments to be elected; and which, was subverted by the repeal of the triennial Act, and substituting septennial Parliaments.

Excepting the Rebellion, of 1715, and a faint attempt four years after, which might have been formidable, had not Providence befriended him; for 10,000 regular troops, under command of the Duke of Ormond, which were embarked in a Spanish Squadron (against whom, after destroying eleven of their Ships of War, and taking ten, War was declared;) but they were dispersed by a violent storm, off Cape Finisterre. Except this War with Spain, which lasted about eighteen Months, his whole reign was peaceable. Yet, little short of 28 millions were granted, by Parliament, in about 12 years and nine months, that he reigned; which was, on an average, about £. 2,137,420 a year; when 1,311,230 was deemed sufficient for the annual expence of Government, in that time, of Peace; and £. 826,238 yearly, might have been deducted from the national Debt; whereas, no more than £. 227,408 was rubbed off; so that, it was so much, somewhat more than a quarter of a million, less, at his death, than at the death of Queen Anne; which might have been 10 millions and a half.

A few months before his death, Hostilities commenced again, with Spain, when they besieged Gibraltar; but were obliged, after losing 10,000 Men, in about five months, to desist, and raised the Siege; with the loss of but 200 Men, to the Garrison. This was near about the time that the King died, at Osnaburg; where he scarcely arrived alive, on a visit to his german Dominions (the first) in his 68th. year. So that, on the accession of George the second, the Nation was engaged in a fresh War, with Spain, occasioned by that bone of perpetual contention, Gibraltar; which Spain wanted to be restored, when the former Preliminaries were settled. But Parliament addressed the King, to retain and preserve his undoubted Right to it, and to Minorca; a Right, equally valid with that of the norman Conqueror, to the Crown of England. It is needless to make a comparison; but, supposing the Lizzard point, at the extremity of Cornwall, were a strong Garrison, of great importance to England. Would it not be a perpetual Eye sore, to the English? or would they tamely submit to have it withheld from them, by an Enemy? that is, by a foreign Power, with whom we were frequently at War. 'Tis not to be supposed; but, that we should ever bear them enmity, until it was restored; and therefore, we may reasonably conclude, that, while we retain Gibraltar, Spain can never be our friend, and firm Ally.

It is pretended, to secure our Commerce in the Mediterranean; but that can only be necessary, when we are at War with Spain. I presume they never imposed a tribute, on Ships passing through the Straits, as at Elfinour, at the en-

trance into the Baltic ; and surely, they are not so commercial a people, as to aim at engrossing all the Commerce there, to themselves, like the Mines of Peru. I am of opinion, that Gibraltar never was of that value to England, as to be worth the expence of keeping it. But when we take into the account, the number of Men, whose lives have paid for that barren Rock, which never produced necessaries for the support of a hundredth part of them, we cannot but conclude, that 'tis not worth contending for ; and yet, an attempt made to regain it would be a sufficient excuse for declaring War against them ; or for a much less provocation ; taking care, always, to make them the aggressors ; as in the year 1739.

However, Peace was concluded (at Seville) early in 1729, without restoring Gibraltar ; but other restitution was made, of greater value ; they were to have satisfaction for all the Ships destroyed by Sir George Bing, in 1718. Yet, notwithstanding these apparently amicable concessions, War was again declared against Spain, on the 29th. of October, 1739, ten years after, which continued as many. This War was engaged in, to maintain the *honour* of the nation ; for the seizure of a single Ship, belonging to the South Sea Company, and for £. 95,000 due from them, to the English Merchants. The first blow was struck by the brave Admiral Vernon, in taking Porto Bello, and demolishing Fort Chagre, which was deemed impregnable, in New Spain. From such circumstances, it does not appear clear to me, but that, England is full as quarrelsome, as destructive of Peace and Concord, between Nations, as either France or Spain, or other European Powers ; yet, we endeavour to blacken them, always, and to have it believed that *they* only are the aggressors ; that we are quite inoffensive, and peaceably inclined, at all times ; never engaging in War, but when it is unavoidable, as at present.

Mr. Pitt's most extraordinary Speech, on the occasion, on Friday, the first of February, doubtless does him great honour ; in which, he recommends a War against France, which he says is inevitable. His Oration abounds with the pathetic, in such a superlative degree, that we feel ourselves distressed, for his exquisite feelings and delicate sensibility ; which we cannot but give him credit for. But, his feeling seems to be for Kings, only ; and, we will suppose, a little for self. Where are his feelings for the People, groaning under the burthen of Taxes, laid on them by him and his great Progenitor ? where is his Philanthropy, when he would involve the Nation in a War, unnecessarily, against those who are in no wise disposed to disturb our Peace ; but whose earnest wish to be our firm Friend and Ally, in the most glorious Cause

of Liberty; which, heretofore, we gloried in; a War, by which thousands of harmless and inoffensive people may be massacred, sacrificed to his Ambition; vain Man; how can he reconcile that to his pretended sensibility? has he settled that point with his callous Conscience? has he no feeling for the innumerable calamities of War? None, it seems; 'tis his harvest, 'tis the thing wanted, and seems determined on, at all events. But he may find his error, when too late to retreat; and be called to account for it, when a much finer speech, in his defence, will avail nothing.

Heaven protect and guard the King from such advisers; such Friends, to themselves only, I fear.* If the French have done wrong, if their actions be ever so flagitious, so they do not interfere with the concerns of other States, to whom are they amenable? not to us; what *right* then have we to call them to account, for what only concerns themselves? Vile as they are represented, let it be remembered, that they had a Precedent for what they have done, from us; and shall we presume to deal out vengeance on them? are they accountable to us? "Vengeance is mine, I will repay it, saith the Lord." Who, then, shall dare to wrest it from him? But, we may be the humble Instrument, in the hand of Providence. I fear, we may presume too much, and assume the principal, rather than the agent, and usurp what we have no claim to. First, let us examine ourselves, let us make a strict scrutiny into the secret recesses of our own hearts, and be fully satisfied that all is right there, all Peace, within; and if our Conscience acquits us, as being void of offence, towards God and Man, we are, then, authorized to cast the first stone.

I would willingly imagine, were it possible, that Mr. Pitt was ignorant of the Official Note of the Executive Power of France, in answer to that of the British Ministry; dated, Paris, January 7th. 1793. For, I do not conceive that any person, who was not interested in it, or had some sinister view, in a War with France, can (after what has passed, and after the haughty answer of Lord Grenville, to the first,

* It was reported of our gracious Queen, that her greatest recommendation to the King's affection and regard was a letter, wrote by her to the King of Prussia, on the calamities of War; which was shewn to one of our Generals (I think, the Marquis of Granby) who shew'd it to the King. As fame has been lavish in praise of her benignity and delicacy of sentiment, I hope her Majesty still retains the same delicate sensibility; and, although more interested in it now, is not insensible to the horrors of War; and that, her humane feelings will induce her to interfere, and endeavour to dissuade the King from engaging in a war, which may be avoided.

It has been attributed a virtue, in the Queen, never to interfere in the Cabinet, in political matters; but, I think, that an interference, in this case will be highly worthy of, and do her, Majesty lasting honour.

from them) justify it to himself; and especially, as Spain had not scrupled to treat with them, with whom they had negotiated in the same manner as with England. And I think, that those who advise the King, to a War with them, ought to be called to account for it; for, if they are not deemed Traitors, and Enemies to the State, I shall not scruple to pronounce them, not Friends to either King or State; and that they are inimicable to the Human species, in general; seeing that, numbers of harmless and useful Men must fall victims, be sacrificed to their ambitious and mercenary Views.

BUT, to return. The transactions spoken of, above, which are recorded in history, may not be known to every reader; and as we are naturally partial to our native Country, I thought it proper, as it must be more satisfactory, to give this summary account of the commencement of the Reigns of his present Majesty's Ancestors; that they may conceive a more impartial idea of the grievances complained of, and whence they originated; by which, they will better conceive how they may, and in what manner they ought to be redressed, if there be a possibility of redress.

The National Debt, which was *somewhat* lessened, in the reign of George the first, was, at the commencement of George the second's, £66,112,879. He began his reign in the first year of my birth; and I well remember it being about 80 millions, when I was capable of thinking and reflecting; and though in no wise turned for Politics, I thought it enormous, and impossible that it should continue to increase long. How little did I then imagine, that I should live to the time, when 200 millions more were added thereto; more than all the Land in the Nation is worth. Must not this be alarming to every Englishman? what can be the result of it but a national Bankruptcy? and therefore, the sooner and better; or must the People groan under a load of Taxes to pay the Interest of it (more than nine millions sterling) for another Century? It cannot be; some means *must* be devised to reduce it, and that soon; or I should not wonder if half the labouring Poor, and many others, of small fortunes, emigrated to France, or America, in a short time.

I should have deemed it more excusable, or even justifiable, had it accumulated rapidly, in the reign of George I. who (like William) thinking himself not very firmly seated on the Throne of England, while there was a Pretender to it, whose claim was supported by the French King; thereby rendering the Crown more permanent and secure, to his successors; by making it the interest of the monied men, as well as the proprietors of Land, or more so, to support his

claim, and prevent a Revolution, in which they were so immediately interested. But, as the Debt has increased to the present bulk, in the present reign, and since the Rebellion of the year 1745, when all fear of further disturbance, from that quarter, had subsided; we are led to look for the cause of the evil in the bad management of public affairs, in Government, and corrupt measures of the Ministry of whatever party; who are sharers in the general spoil of the People; and who, are rioting in every excess of Luxury; ransacking the Indies, the Globe, and forcing Nature to produce what is not in nature. I have heard of 100 Guineas being given for 100 Peaches; and I have known of five Guineas a pound given for Cherries, at Midwinter. While the Great are cursed with such luxurious appetites, which their Estates, great as they are, cannot procure them, they will ever have recourse to means, tho' so very unjustifiable, by which they may indulge and gratify them. I query, if they would eat a Cherry when in its perfection, at the proper season. Will any one say, that 'tis better, and more for the general good of the whole, that a few should have wherewith to indulge thus; than that all should be able to live comfortably? Some gradation there ever will and must be, in Society, it could not otherwise subsist; but of this hereafter.

Every attempt, or pretence to reduce the national Debt, of late years, was truly ridiculous, and meant merely to amuse the People, not to ease their burthen; as I do not remember, that ever half a million was appropriated, and applied to that use, at one time. How futile, and inadequate to the purpose must every such reduction appear; it is an insult to the People, when they consider how it was laid on, by tens and twelve Millions at once. Suppose a person just beginning to feel the effect of Taxes, at twenty years of age; if he lived to a hundred, he would scarcely feel the effects of it, in the reduction of Taxes; supposing it perpetual Peace, and such trifling sums paid yearly. To pay it off rapidly, in a short time, were it possible, would be hurtful to Commerce; as the Nation is so drained of its Specie, by our Indian Commerce, and other, worse means; but if a stop be not put to the continual increase of Paper currency, there will be no Money left in the nation, soon; and then, of what value will all the Paper be, which is now in circulation, if there be not a supply of Specie, equal thereto? I fear, that the Butcher could not pay for the Cattle, at Smithfield, with Paper; nor the Baker, and the Brewer, give us Bread and Beer for it; much less give change against a Bank Note, of a few, hard, and heavy Guineas.

To return to the Hanoverian succession, that ever memorable *Æra*, which gave England a King from the illustrious House of Brunswick Luneberg; and placed his great Grandfather, George, Lewis Guelph, on the Throne. The amount of the national Debt, at that *Æra*, is mentioned above; and that it was somewhat reduced when George the second mounted the Throne; which was increased to 190 millions on the accession of George the third, the present, most gracious King; which commenced on the 25th of October, 1760; and, with the Queen, he was crowned on the 22nd of September, 1761, with the usual, additional, empty Title, *King of France*, annexed. I would ask any disinterested person, who will seriously reflect on it, what end he can suppose it to answer, to be stiled King of France? not having an Acre of Land there, not a Province, or single Town tributary to the English Crown; but to irritate them, and cause quarrels between the two Crowns, on every frivolous occasion. As the Crown of France is now without a Head to wear it, there can never be a fitter time to make our claim to it; probably, that may be the intention of the great preparation making for War, at this time; for I know of no other pretence we can have, against France? I am of opinion, that England will gain no credit from it; we had better accept of their proffered Friendship, than commence Hostilities with, and squander a few millions more of the Public's money on them: But we are rich, and have no use for our money.

THE Reign of George the second was about 34 years; in the 12th of which, the national Debt was reduced to 46,314,829 in the year 1739, having enjoyed ten years Peace. But engaging again in a War, on the Continent, which lasted near ten years, it was encreased to 64,593,799; and in 1750, to £. 875,028,386. Parliament granted the sum of 59,899,119£. in eight years of that War, almost seven and a half, yearly; which sunk the nation upwards of 28,700,000, more in Debt, than at its commencement; so that, what I have before said, I might very well remember the national Debt being about 80,000,000. England was now at Peace with all Europe; but there were some disturbances both in the eastern and western world. But, a fresh War broke out between us and the French, in the year 1756, and George the second died in 1760; at which time, the Debt was about 90,000,000; and, in 32 years of the present Reign, at the beginning of the year 1793, it was upwards of 290,000,000; which encrease, on an average, is about six millions and a quarter, yearly; pro-

digious! Altho' this Reign, except the America War, and in the elder Mr. Pitt's expensive Administration, a rupture with France; and after, with Spain, has been rather pacific than otherwise. How then is it possible such immense sums could be wanted for necessary expences of Government? and for what purpose have the Taxes been continually augmented during the present Administration? Would they have continued to increase as they have done; if the Revolution in France had not happened, and the People, here, would have born it? it seems so, indeed. It is easy to be accounted for, that the Minister should be determined on a War with them, for breaking the Charm, with which, the People have been so long fascinated; he would be happy in giving them a good drubbing, I suppose. But, (thanks to them and to Mr. Paine) the spell is destroy'd, the fascination is over, the People's Eyes are opened; and, whether it be War or Peace, 'tis all the same; they are not to be amused any longer, but are determined to think for themselves, and judge of what is *just* and *right*, and fit to be done, hereafter.

I HAVE already observed; that the grand cause of the high price of Provisions, and necessary Articles of life, is the Law of Primogeniture, which is a Monopoly of them, in the first instance; and which, instead of being sanctioned by Law, the law ought to militate against it. Whatever beauties some may see, and others pretend to see; in that order and gradual subordination, so highly extolled, by those who are in the uppermost class; I am of opinion that the distinctions are too great, the gradation is too sudden, and by no means regular. It is either too high or too low, as well amongst the people of Business as those who are independant of it. There would be more beauty in it, and it would be much more satisfactory to the general mass of the people, if the disproportion between them were not so great; for surely, no one can say, that, in the nature and propriety of things, it ought to be so; or that, in the moral fitness of things, one Man has a juster claim to live at ease, and in plenty, in preference to others; for, however highly they may think of themselves, and rate their deserts, they may be assured, that others, on whom they look down, with ineffable contempt, have as high an opinion, and often with more reason, of their own merits; which, put in the scale against *theirs*, would preponderate.

I expect, ere this, to be branded with the opprobrious appellation of a *Leveller*, which, if it consists in the industrious and laborious living comfortably, and the High and Mighty in

less profusion, instead of their insatiable appetites being gratified with things out of nature, indulging themselves, at any price, at Christmas, or in January, in what nature produces only in August; by which, one man shall devour, at one Meal, what (in value) would keep a decent family a Month; if this be what they denominate a Leveller, I freely own myself one; nor can I be easily persuaded, that 'tis better for the whole that it should be so; nor, however highly they may boast of the grandeur of the State, of its riches and prosperity, enjoyed only by a few, I apprehend, that but little can be said of the happiness of the People, in general; and surely, for the whole to be happy, a few might be content with less than five hundred or a thousand Shares to one, or ten thousand Shares of many; such a gradation and subordination, I think, is out of all proportion.

Instead of the whole Estate of a great Lord, or most noble Duke, devolving, with the Title, on the Heir, to support the dignity of it, as now, if it were divided equally amongst the male issue (after portioning the females) there would be no need of billiting the younger Sons on the Public, and continually creating new and useless Places for them, or giving them Pensions, out of the Public's money; for which, no service whatever is rendered them. Hence, Wars are fomented, for the sake of the Officers in the Army, and Navy; and hence a standing Army is kept in continual pay, and a Fleet always ready for Sea. Hence, the Law is, by chicanery and useless delays, made a fine field for plunder, and the first Offices of it filled with younger Sons of the Gentry; others feather their Nests, as Baristers, Solicitors, &c. who are a pest to Society, and not of the least use in many Causes they are retained in, and fee'd for; unless to pervert Justice, by annulling Facts, invalidating the most valid Evidence, and making the worse appear the better reason, and what is black appear white, be deemed useful. Hence the Church is another spacious field, for the provision of younger Brothers, feeding on the fat of the Land, like idle and voluptuous Drones in a Hive, doing *nothing* for it. The Faculty cannot so well provide for them; as *their* success depends on their reputation, solely, acquired by study and long practice; to which they are rarely much addicted.

These, with the unnecessary, although so rapid an accumulation of TAXES to support them, are the blessed effects of our excellent Constitution, in Church and State; which our wise Forefathers, with wonderful sagacity, and most profound penetration, so wisely framed; and as wisely entailed on Posterity. But, surely, Posterity cannot be bound by

Laws, for ever, which are repugnant to reason, because our Forefathers, in their infinite Wisdom, chose to be governed by them; without the power to alter or annul them, as it may suit with their Interests and the difference of Times. I imagine that they abolished some Laws, then in force, when they modeled what is called the CONSTITUTION; and has not every succeeding Generation an equal right to mutilate, to correct, and new model it, as it may be found most convenient, and better suited to their interests and happiness? notwithstanding all that Mr. Burke has advanced to the contrary; and, that every succeeding King claims the Crown, and ascends the Throne, in contempt of the People; and, if he be so disposed, will govern and rule them, (if he can) according to the Laws then established, however they may disapprove of it.

It is preposterously absurd, that Titles, and Honour should be hereditary; 'tis well that Wisdom and Literature were not made so, too. Titles, which were meant for badges of honour, should be bestowed, only, on those, who, for their signal services to the State, have deserved to be distinguished and honoured; not because they may, by any means, perhaps the basest of means (as many have done in the Eastern world) procure and amassed large fortunes, and purchased Land to a great value; in which, the Nation is not benefited in the least, but rather distressed thereby. The Privilege vested in the Crown, of bestowing Honour, by a Title, seems as if vested there for no other purpose but to secure the Crown to him who has obtained it, by whatever claim; tho' often unworthy of the dignity. The Virtues possessed by any Person, as of Courage and Intrepidity, in the Army or Navy, of Integrity and Veracity, of Sagacity, of Fortitude and Perseverance, in the Council, &c., for which he has been ennobled, could not be entailed on his Heir, like his Estate, and Title. We frequently find a Title devolve on an errant Poltroon. I think, that a Right Honourable Scoundrel may debase, and greatly degrade the dignity, but cannot give the least lustre, or reflect one spark of honour on the rank of Nobility; whatever Abilities and mental endowments he may possess, he can have no claim to Honour, but from his virtuous Actions.

There is no need for Laws, to make and keep up a difference and distinction amongst Men; Nature having, effectually, provided for that; tho' not in the degree, as now; that subordination which is found necessary to support a despotic Government. Such is the diversity of disposition in the nature of Man, that the restless Ambition of some, the supine Indolence of others; the Folly and Vanity of all, with the Ingenuity

and Industry of many, will ever be productive of that difference which would stimulate men to action, by which to acquire Property and Competence. It is not possible for all to be on an equality; if, at any time, they were so, there would, in a short time after, be a considerable difference amongst them. So that, there is no fear that there would be none to do the drudgeries, and perform the menial offices of Life, as Servants, or otherwise. 'Tis certain, that they would not be so numerous, nor would it be necessary; but there would be enough, ready, to do all that was wanted. The very lowest, such as digging in Mines, cleansing Shores and Privies, tweeping Chimneys, &c. they should be the punishment of Culprits, and Criminals of every degree, in proportion to their Crimes; which, except for wilful Murder, Forgeries, and other capital Offences, should not be punished with Death. Punishment by hard labour, would have a better effect than by death; and, at the same time, render Criminals serviceable to the Community. Frequent Executions, instead of producing terror in the common people, and deter them from pursuing the paths of Iniquity which brought them to it, rather tend to make them more obdurate, and insensible to the awfull spectacle; than if they were less frequent, and performed with the utmost solemnity.

It does not seem possible that Men should long continue in a state of nature; their mutual wants, real or imaginary, compel them to form Societies, which necessarily tends to civilization; and each member of the Community, finding his own interest and well being in it, is assiduous in his endeavours to supply the wants of others, while they contribute towards his. But, will any person say, that a few of them have a right to live in idleness, enjoying the produce of the labour of others, in great profusion, yet contribute nothing towards it themselves? while those who labour are very scantily served. Surely, in the nature of things, no reason can be assigned for this; but that all should labour alike, and have an equal chance, at least, to procure and enjoy the comforts of life, which cannot be on the present system of Government. But the disparity between one part of the Community and another is too great, it is distorted, and out of all just or reasonable proportion. Why should one, from his birth almost, be a slave, a pack-horse, to do the drudgeries of others? to make and contrive their pleasures in which *they* are not permitted to partake. There seems to me, more Wisdom in the interference of legislative authority to preserve an equilibrium than in destroying it, and in restoring it when lost; as in a well regulated Machine; than in making the bulk of

rankind dependant on a few, for the small share they enjoy of the comforts of life.

But that could not answer the purposes and intention of Government; whose aim, it is evident, is not to make the people happy, but dependant, and to keep them in a state of slavish subjection, under the shew, or pretence rather, of Liberty; tho' scarcely of vending their Complaints, and telling their Grievances to one another; but tax them with Sedition, and disaffection to the King and his mild Government, for which we are so much envied by other european Nations. Mean while they are fleeced of their property; Government laying claim to, and forcing from them, under the sanction of Law, a share of their earnings, to feed and pamper those who have, already, abundantly more than their share. But while there is a Luxury wanting, they will never be satisfied; ideal wants are innumerable, real wants very few.

It is not possible that one Man should consume or spend on himself, in the Necessaries of life, that is, to devour them, himself, £300 a year; nor with a moderate family seven hundred, where there are any pretensions to œconomy. But, by ransacking both Indies, at a great expence, and, at a still greater, force nature to produce what nature has denied, the fruits of the Earth out of season; by forced heat, to make her bring forth in cold Climes, the spontaneous Fruits of the torrid Zone; the greatest Estates may be dissipated and squandered away, in voluptuous excess. Yet, with all these redundant Luxuries, indulged to the utmost excess, without the aid of Gambling, that is, gaming high, it is not possible to dissipate and run through 20 thousand pounds a year, much less fifty, or a hundred. The prodigious sums expended on sumptuous Buildings, and lavished, in superbly furnishing them; and still more in pleasure Grounds, with sculpture, painting, &c. in decorating their Palaces, may be of use to the builder, to the Artist, and ingenious Artificer; provided they are paid in due time; for otherwise, it is ruinous. But I am of opinion, that every excess, even in these, is hurtful to the Community, at large; as it furnishes the means, in a lower sphere, of imitating the higher; and thus, the contagion is handed down, from the Nobleman to the lowest mechanic, each vying with the other, in aiming to live in the same stile with those who are far better enabled to live high. Hence ensues Bankruptcies, and other failures in Business, to the great prejudice of thousands of industrious people. But when we add to the former list of useless excesses, the number of Servants, kept for state, in idleness, their numerous

Splendid Equipages, and Horses, devouring the produce of their Lands, which so many are in want of, we need not wonder that all they have is too little, to support it; which reduces the Nobleman to the mean and abject state of dependence (by Places and Pensions) on the labour of the poor and wretched; even of those who beg in the streets for their miserable subsistence

From what has been said, it must evidently appear, to those who choose to see, that the Law of Primogeniture is calculated, and established, in order to secure the succession to, and maintain the Prerogatives of the Crown, and keep the people in subjection. By establishing a system of Aristocracy, Government, which began with Usurpation and Tyranny, was supported; and continued, contrary to reason and equity, to enslave the People, and compel them, by distress, to labour for and contribute towards *their* support, in ease and plenty. If that Law were abolished, and instead thereof, that none should purchase, inherit, or possess, more than five thousand a year, in Land, we might then hope, or be assured that the necessaries of Life wou'd, in a short time, be reduced so as to be within the reach of all; who by industry, had a right to it. Whatever improvement to the Estate, or addition to his Fortune, each person, so disposed, might, by Business, Commerce, Law, Physic or otherwise make thereto, he would have a right to enjoy as long as he lived; and turn it to the best account he could, for himself and for his Children; who, at his death, should, by Law, be equal sharers therein; that is, the male issue, the Females being first portioned; unless, by Will, Legacies were bequeathed to others Relations, or Friends, to a certain amount, in proportion to the whole Estate, but no more. On this plan, a great deal more Land might be cultured, and turned to better account; Crown Lands, Church Lands, large Forests and royal Chaces, Parks, and large Gardens and pleasure Grounds, be rendered arable; all which, together, are a large part of the whole Nation. A great part of the above being appropriated, now, for pleasure, and pasturing an unnecessary number of useless Horses, living (like their owners) in luxurious plenty, in ease and idleness; devouring what wou'd support thousands who are in want; starving, perishing with hunger, in a Land where plenty reigns, flowing with Milk and Honey.

The mitred Clergy, and other useless Dignitaries of the Church, compose a formidable part of the aristocratic system; who live in all the luxurious enjoyment of the good things of this World, and think but little of any other; for which, no

service, whatever, is rendered the Community; and, the beneficed Clergy, who devour a tenth part of the produce of the whole Nation, do little more for it; while the Curates, who do almost all that is to do, receive but a small share of it. As these have no hereditary claim to what they enjoy, there can be no injustice to any, if, in future, a more equal distribution be made amongst them. I am inclined to think, that 'twould greatly aid and strengthen the Cause of Religion, to have no particular Church established and sanctioned by Government, in preference to all other; for, who can say which is the only, true orthodox? France and Spain say, the Church of Rome, England protests against it; and Scotland against both. Let Toleration and free Licence be given to all, without distinction; every Sectary adhere to whatever form of worship he most approves, and pursue it in peace and quiet, without molestation, or interruption; no one being particularly countenanced by Government. All (if they are sincere, in what they profess) think they are in the right; and all with equal reason; for surely, they must think so, if they give the preference to any; none can earnestly pursue a path which he but imagines may mislead him. There need be no provision made, by Government, for their Pastors; Subscriptions amongst themselves, and the voluntary donations, according to their diligence and assiduity in their Function, and exemplary Life; there wou'd be no danger of their enjoying a decent and comfortable subsistence; they wou'd be handsomely provided for

AFTER what has been advanced, I presume, that no reasonable and disinterested person can doubt of the necessity for a general Reform; and, for those who are interested in state affairs, it was needless to have said half so much; but, if ten times more were said, and by a Cicero or a Demosthenes, every Page replete with incontrovertible argument, and every Line with infallible Truth, it would have no impression on them; it is therefore useless to say more. But I am of opinion, that three fourths of my readers will be of the reasonable kind; and be convinced that the whole Fabric of Government is greatly out of repair, and scarcely worth repairing, tho' it may be worth amending; that it wou'd be better, much easier, and safer, to frame an entire new one, than tamper with the old Constitution; for, while one flaw was patching up, another larger fracture wou'd appear, that was not seen before; so that 'tis dangerous meddling with it. For, having been so often tampered with, and so long hackney'd, through so

many Reigns, none attempting to leave it in a better condition than it came into their hands, every part is so much out of order, that the whole is a mere wreck

Although so much has been said about a Constitution, nothing being more frequent in the mouths of all parties, for and against, one saying this is Constitution, another, that 'tis unconstitutional, it is palpably evident, that no such thing as a Constitution exists, nor ever did, in England; and Mr. Burke's declining, what he had proposed to do, to compare it with the french Constitution, for *want of time*, evinces it; finding that he had proposed to compare a non entity with reality. So that, after all, the English Constitution, so much boasted of, as being the envy of all Europe, proves to be a mere Chimera of the imagination; which, those who talk so much of it, have little or no conception of, no what it properly is, or rather *should* be. For surely, if we have a Constitution, it would be very easily determined; as nothing could be more rational and natural, than to settle the disputes by referring to it. Does no person know where it is deposited, and to be found? surely; a thing so excellent, as it is generally allow'd to be, and being of such consequences, in a Government, cannot be so mislaid, as never to be found again. I apprehend, that most people have confounded the idea of a Constitution with MAGNA CHARTA, as ratified by King John, to the Barons in his reign: which is no more than a Charter, originally from William the Conqueror; who, in his great lenity and indulgence, graciously condescended to grant certain Privileges to the People whom he had enslaved, and usurped dominion over; a strange Constitution *that* must be; and yet, 'tis the only one, of which we make so much boast.

HAVING done all I proposed, or meant to do, shewn, to conviction, if not proved, to demonstration, the necessity of a general Reform in Government, I might now conclude; but, in order to throw more light on it, I shall suppose, and imagine what never happened nor likely to happen, and yet by no means improbable; that a noble and truly worthy Lord (but of small Estate, for a Peer) enjoying Places of trust under the Crown, somewhat lucrative, being in great favour with his Prince; which enabled him to support the dignity of his station with credit, to himself, and with honour, unenvied; as he not only deserved, but adorned his high station; which rendered his virtues more eminently conspicuous; and added a lustre, which is rarely to be seen, dazzling the public Eye, with such superior splendour. Let us, I say, suppose, that this worthy Peer, in the zenith of Fortune, and in the meridian of Life, unexpectedly to resign all his employments

at Court, and retire to a delectable Retreat at some distance from town; not large, but somewhat retired; enclosed by a fine Park, yet commanding prospects of the adjacent, delightful Country. In this retreat, he enjoyed sound health and domestic happiness; with a most amiable Companion, whom he had married since he retired from Court, to live on 6000 Pounds a year; which was heightened, by two fine Boys and a lovely Girl; whose Education he superintended, himself, having proper and able assistants; without ever visiting the Town, except on necessary business; for he was not at all reserved, but, he never went to Court.

This worthy Peer, having secluded himself from the noisy, bustling World, in retirement, for several years, was almost forgotten at Court, and actually dead to the gay flatterers around the Throne; when, one summer's forenoon, his Majesty, being in the vicinage of his Retreat, taking an airing after Breakfast, with few attendants, was disposed to call in on his Lordship, and take Chocolate with him. Although so slightly attended, that he might have pass'd for a private Gentleman; the arrival of the royal visitor, into his Demesnes, was made known to his Lordship, before his Majesty entered, the Court-yard; so that, he was prepared to assist his Majesty in alighting from his Horse, and welcome him to his Mansion, with a composure unmixed with surprise; and, without being elated with the visit, he attended his royal Guest into the Saloon, which overlook'd his Garden; and, through a spacious Vista, beyond a large Basin of water, the View was terminated by a fine, old Cathedral, at about five miles distance.

Here, his Majesty was disposed to be seated, and enjoy the delightful prospect over the Garden; which was rendered more so, by the fragrance of the odoriferous shrubs and flowers, on the Parterre, which, the cooling Zephyrs wafted into the Saloon. Chocolate was ordered; and, his Majesty insisted on his noble Host being seated; as he intended to have some conversation with him, and be informed, in what manner he had spent so many years, secluded from the world; with his reasons for laying down his Employments, and retiring from Court; at a time of life, when the faculties of both body and mind are in their full vigour. His Lordship acquiesced, and prepared himself to give his Majesty a faithful narrative; saying that, as he had absented himself so long, he had entirely forgot the language of Courts, to which he was never much addicted; and therefore, your Majesty (says he) must expect to hear simple and undisguised Truth; as I am not qualified to embellish the narration I shall give with metaphor;

and flowers of rhetoric. I thought you had known me better, my Lord. Do you not know, that I always required sincerity in my Ministers, and Attendants; and insisted on the Truth being told me, at all times? For that very reason, Sir, knowing that it would offend you, it has been your misfortune, all your life, never, or but seldom, to hear the voice of truth, from them; and for sincerity, except when those who are out desiring to be *in* Office, and those who are in, to remain, there is scarce any sincerity around your Throne. The King seemed to be a little nettled at what was said; but desired that he would proceed with his narrative, adhering strictly to truth.

Your Majesty may, probably, remember, that 'twas about the time that hostilities commenced, or, that coercive measures were determined on, to reduce the Colonies to obedience; that ruinous plan, on which, with real concern, for the honour of the Crown, I perceived your Majesty too deeply interested, for me to interfere, with *my* advice; being well assured that it would have had but little weight, against those whom you confided in. His Majesty bit his lip; but smilingly said, I thought 'twas for the loss of Lady G. that you left the Court. It was neither for one nor the other, my Liege, singly, but, jointly, they were the occasion of it; and yet, I am of opinion, that none guessed the true motive for my retirement.

Lady G. was a very amiable Woman; yet by no means suited to make one of my domestic turn happy. She had a large fund of good nature, which balanced her less valuable qualities; but she was too gay, and addicted to fashionable Pleasures to excess; and, consequently, had no relish for that calm tranquil state, which can be found, only, in domestic life, to which I had a natural propensity: In short, my Liege, we were Lord and Lady Townley. To support the gay sphere of life, into which, my Lady had insensibly drawn me, I was obliged to solicit the Employment, which your Majesty's partiality conferred on me; as the patrimonial Estate which I inherit, was not sufficient to support the expence of my Household; and, I satisfied the scruples I had, by considering, that 'twas not worse bestowed, perhaps, on *me*, than it might have been on others; who, probably, had as little claim, or right to it, from their deserts. How often have I wished, that Lady G. would copy the pattern set by your Majesty's amiable Consort.

I had, for sometime, been wavering, and revolving in my mind, on the disolute, and insipid life I led; so unconsonant to my inclinations, and wholly repugnant to my Peace. I could not sincerely join in the measures adopted, and therefore

thought of relinquishing my Employments; for how, thought I, can I receive the Public's money, being conscious that I am rendering no service, whatever, to the Community; 'tis not honourable, it is unjustifiable; but, how can I live as I do, without it? My Lady's death soon determined me. Being left a single man, again, without any incumbrance, I did not hesitate, but soon determined what I should do. Being always speculative, and studiously inclined, I resolved to abandon the empty life I had led so long, in which I experienced no solid enjoyment. I have net 6000 Pounds a year; it will procure all that is necessary, to make life comfortable; if Happiness be within the reach of Fortune, I may ensure it. I will retire to B—t, and try to recover that serenity of mind I have long been a stranger to. It was soon put into execution, after having resolved on it. I accompanied my Lady's Hearse down to B—t, saw her Remains deposited in the family Vault, and have resided here ever since.

One Blessing, Fortune had in store for me, which I had never anticipated, scarcely hoped for. I had but little acquaintance with the neighbouring Gentlemen; but two, with whom I was intimate; one of which lived almost intirely in the Country; happy in his family and connections, he thought not that a town life could add thereto; so was seldom longer than a month, in the year, there, after Christmas. The other spent the greatest part of his time in the fashionable *beau monde*, and was seldom more than three months at his Seat, here, in the hunting season. These two, particularly the former (Sir H. D.) are my chief acquaintance; I am satisfied with them, and seek not for more. Sir H. and myself sometimes hunt with my Lord, and spend the Evening with him, in convivial hilarity.

Although Sir H.'s Seat is but three miles distant, I frequently spent a week or more with him, being a lone man, and soon became intimately acquainted with all his family; which consisted of himself and Lady, a Sister and five Children, when all at home. I had not made many visits there, before I discovered in Sir H.'s Sister, something more than merely agreeable, for she was (tho' not a beauty) truly amiable, and possessed a large share of good nature, good sense, and sound judgment; and was entirely devoted to retired life. Her Fortune was not great, but I had enough; and therefore, resolved that it should be no bar to my happiness. We soon understood each other; and, in little more than a year, I was made the happiest of men, with the Sister of my much valued friend; which united the two families in one; visiting each other alternately. Ever since, I have enjoyed all this world

can afford; nor (pardon me, my Liege) do I think, that your Majesty has any idea of happiness compared with mine. There is not any Place, nor a gift in the Crown, for which I would barter my present lot; nor would I relinquish it, to sway your Majesty's imperial Sceptre.

I have no doubt of your Lordship's sincerity, and believe these to be your real sentiments; and yet, my Lord, no chagrin in the case; I cannot persuade myself, that you would relinquish a Crown, to live the retired life you do. Although I must own, that there are intervals in which, I think that I could freely resign Royalty, to be at Peace, and unincumbered with the insignia of it. But I find, that 'tis when I am out of humour (which is rather too frequent) when the measures adopted are cross grained, and cannot be enforced; as in the hateful contest with my Colonists. Had your Majesty succeeded in that contest, I am at a loss to conceive, in what respect it would have added to your happiness; unless in easing the burthen of your English Subjects, which does not seem, to me, either reasonable or just; that one body of people should be compelled to bear the burthen of others which they had but little contributed to; and for which they were but ill provided. Nor, altho' your Majesty is made to believe the contrary, are the far greater part of the People, here, able to pay, without great inconvenience, the Taxes with which they are oppressed. Then, how could I, my Liege; in honour, or in conscience, continue to receive 4000 Pounds, yearly, out of the labour of the Poor, having six thousand of my own, for which I did nothing; conscious that I did not render the People the least service, wharever, from the useless Department I was at the head of, so long.

You are *too* scrupulous, my Lord; how can the great business of Government be carried on without Taxes, and degrees of State kept up? If all acted with honour, my Liege, a small sum; comparatively, would suffice. The Customs (and those not near so high, as at present) with an easy Land-Tax, would amply provide for every *necessary* purpose of Government, in time of Peace. But if, by Government, your Majesty includes all that is generally implied by that specious Term; such as a standing Army, large Navy the Civil List, Pensions, &c. with all that state pageantry attending it, there is no prescribing limits to Taxation. I am clearly of opinion, that when Taxes become burthenfome, and oppressive to the People, they do not strengthen, but have a tendency to sap the very foundation of all good Government.

This, my Lord, is indeed, new doctrine, to me; and if this be the language of Truth, I must own, I have not been

accustomed to hear its voice. Yet, although there may be some dissonance to *my* ear, not being familiarized thereto, I do not think it unharmonious to an ear that is in perfect unison with its dictates. And now, my Lord, tell me, candidly, what are your sentiments on the present situation of Affairs; for, altho' it has been represented to me as a slight storm, which will soon blow over, and subside; I have, in my leisure hours, sometimes reflected on it, and thought that it had a more formidable aspect, than I had been made to believe; but I *now* see it in a more serious light; and therefore, I desire to know your real sentiments thereon.

Your Majesty having condescended to request what you might have commanded, I am doubly bound in duty, to obey; which I am the more inclined to, from conviction, that your Majesty need but to know the real sentiments of the People, in order to concur with them, in what they shall determine on, for the general good of the whole Community. But, if your Majesty is made to believe, that a few Addresses, spuriously obtained, framed by designing men, and signed by a few of their Creatures, and dependants, speak the sentiments of the People, I should not scruple to pronounce those who so deceive you, Traitors to your Majesty, and Enemies to the State. There are some interested Men, in whom your Majesty places confidence, who assure you, that the people, in general, are rich, and well able to pay the Taxes levied on them, without any inconvenience; and therefore, their murmurs are not to be regarded. I have, since I retired, had frequent opportunities of informing myself, truly, of the abilities of the People, of every class, from my Tenants (who are all able men) and others; that, at the least, two fifths of the whole can scarcely get a subsistence; and, that, more than a fourth part live in a distressful situation. A few, indeed, comparatively, are *too* rich; and these pay little regard to the complaints of those who are poor. These are interested in it, my Liege; they *well* know, that 'tis not possible for Government to continue long, as it is; but each flatters himself with the hope that 'twill last *his* time, and therefore, determine to make the most of it, while *they* live; Posterity may shift as well as it can, for *them*. All are corrupted, my Liege, from the Peer to the Mechanic (who lives at ease); the Merchant, the Banker, the great Manufacturers and Traders, in general, live at their ease, in plenty, and are all desirous to protract it as long as they live: Each says, I hope there will be no change in my time; yet, each fears, and dreads its approach,

without just grounds for their fear; a few of the most opulent, the Pensioners, and useless Placemen, *only*, have cause for fear; as they live in luxury on the Poor, and do nothing for it.

Did your Majesty ever consider, that two thirds of the National Debt has accumulated in your Reign; and has a just account of the expenditure been laid before the people? Did your Majesty ever reflect, seriously, what a prodigious sum ten million Pounds sterling is, to be raised by them, yearly, to pay the Interest of it? a dead weight on the people, for which they never eat a morsel; but pay this, to those who have more than they know what to do with. Did your Majesty ever reflect; that the Civil list only, would support 20 thousand families, comfortably, ten thousand decently; and great part of it raised on the laborious Poor, who can scarce get Bread. Did your Majesty ever conceive an idea what the yearly produce of the Nation amounts to; and consider, that a tenth part of it is claimed, and devoured by the Clergy? whose labours conduce not to enrich the State; and, that the majority of them are dependants on a parcel of idle, and useless Drones; living at their ease on the labour of others; while the duties of their function are perform'd by those who get a small share of it. And, though their case is particularly distressing, and their situation rather deplorable, it is far preferable, yes, desirable, compared with that of fifty times their number; who have no dependance for Bread, from one day to another, yet pay the highest for every thing they want; as they can only buy in the smallest quantities, and have the refuse of the market, also; and yet, these miserable Beings, who are scarcely allowed to eat, pay more than their quota of Taxes.

Indeed, my Lord, if all that you have told me be strictly true; that is, if the state of things, and, of the Nation, be as you have represented them, Truth, I must own, is by no means agreeable to me. But, I won't presume that your picture is a Caricature, as much exaggerated, as those given me, by others, were flattered; it cannot, I hope, be so very bad. Indeed, my Leige, it is worse, not better, I assure you. I am a bad hand at Caricature, none worse; my Pictures are the most favourable portraits, not Caricatures. Your People, Sire, have long been dissatisfied with the manner in which they are governed; although they, rather supinely than patiently, submit to it, hoping for amendment; but, seeing none, no prospect of redress, they are driven almost to desperation, and seem ripe for a revolt. And I am much mistaken, my Leige, if many, who have addressed your Majesty, professing so much loyalty, and zealous attachment to the Constitution, so long established, would not be amongst the foremost: and, should your

Ministers push matter so, as to occasion civil commotions, and intestine feuds, they wou'd side with the strongest party. But, I hope there are those about your Majesty; who are your Friends and will not suffer designing men to deceive you, to your ruin; nor carry things with so high a hand, as to cut off all means of retreating, with honour. That Pamphlet, which has been condemned, as a seditious Libel, is replete with many palpable Truths; it has shewn the People their natural Rights; the condemnation of it, now, is of little avail: if it be productive of any thing, 'tis a tacit affirmation of its truth. The business it was meant to do is already done; a spirit of Liberty is diffused among the people, it is gone abroad, and cannot be recalled. A Torrent may be stemmed for a while, with great force; but, in the end, *all* force will be ineffectual.

Indeed, my Lord, I begin to fear, that there is more danger than I was willing to imagine; and wish matters had not been carried with so high a hand: I should be glad to have your Lordship's advice, what is the best to be done in the case.—It would ill become *me*, my Liege, to presume to advise your Majesty, in an affair of such importance; who have so many of the first, and, some of them, the ablest men in the nation, of your Council, and who, are interested in it, I have none. In my retreat, I have nothing to hope, nor am I susceptible of fear; as I am not apprehensive, that I ever rendered myself, when in trust, and am fully conscious I have not since, obnoxious to the People. 'Tis for the reasons you have mentioned my Lord, that I wou'd prefer your advice to theirs; whose interest is so interwoven with mine, that their advice in such case, is not to be depended on. I therefore request to know, what your Lordship wou'd advise me to do; for, I see, that I am somewhat critically situated, in an unfortunate dilemma, for which, few I believe will envy me.

Sire. I have often reflected on it; and will be free to say, that I have, in this retreat, commiserated your unfortunate situation, but cannot advise you in it; I dare not presume; but I will make free, to tell your Majesty what *I* wou'd do, being so situated. The loss of your Colonies, my Liege, and the immense mortgage on the Crown, entailed on this Nation in *your* Reign, will not redound to the glory of it; Posterity will judge, and speak, freely of both. From the year 1789, when William the third was sent for, to rule over England (in whose reign that ruinous, funding system first began) to 1760, when your Majesty acceded to the Crown, about 70 years and a half, the whole amount of the national Debt

was about 90 millions; which is upwards of a million, yearly; deducting your Great Gransire's reign (in which it was reduced somewhat) and about half of William's, before it began, it is about a million and a half yearly. The whole reign of Queen Anne, and her predecessor, William, was almost a continual, continental War; and there were frequent rebellions, till the year 1745, occasioned by James and his Son, which have never disturbed the Peace of your Majesty's reign; and yet, in about 32 years, the Debt is swelled to upwards of 290 millions; which, on an average, is above six millions, yearly. Whatever we may think of the dissipated and licentious reign of Charles the second, Posterity will say, that your Majesty's was a very expensive and extravagant Reign. They will admire your able Financiers; Pitt, North, and Pitt, the younger (with whom the Names of Colbert, or Sir Robert Walpole, cannot be mentioned) will be immortalized. Your Majesty's Reign will be remarkable; were I vested with the sovereignty of Great Britain, I would make it the most remarkable Æra in history; by one act, I would regain the popularity I had lost by preceding ones; I would do an act worthy of a great King; and convince the World that I had the interest of the People at heart; that to make *them* happy, I would anticipate all their hopes and expectations; I would restore the Crown unask'd, and without delay, back to the People, to bestow (if they were so disposed) on whom they thought more worthy of it.—That would be an extraordinary act indeed, my Lord; and is this your Lordship's serious advice? I wish you happy, my Leige; I do not advise your Majesty; but you know what *I* did, to obtain happiness; and, were I seated on England's Throne, I would relinquish it, to be happy. To be completely happy is not the lot of Man; without alloy, none ever were; but I am of opinion, that, Kings are farther from happiness, than the middle class of people. Happiness is not an appendage annexed to a Crown; there seems to me, a thorough incongruity between them, never to be reconciled. It may be truly called a Crown of Thorns; anxious cares, and vexatious disappointments, are its constant and inseparable companions.

Indeed, my Lord, you have truly portray'd, the lot of Kings. And yet, although all allow that their lot is unenviable, none are exempt from the allurements of its fascinating Charms. Some few, indeed, have resigned; but did you, my Lord, ever hear of one declining a Crown, before he had experienced the effects of it? Indeed, my Leige, I know not of

one instance, being called, or invited to accept of sovereignty, and rejected; nor do I pretend to stoicism, superior to others; I only know, from my own experience, that, being offered me now, I would decline it.—But, would you, my Lord, in my situation, having a numerous Family, and having nothing of your own, properly, and absolutely so, resign the Crown, without any provision made, for yourself and family. Report says, my Leige, how true, I know not, that your Majesty has not been unprovident. Your Majesty rules a generous and grateful People; who, when treated generously, know how, and are ever ready to requite it. But, at the worst, your Majesty has a resort, in your German Dominions; where your descendants might still hold sovereign rule, with less anxiety.—I think, my Lord, that I could freely resign the Crown of England, in favour of my Son; but, Germany is a foreign Country, to me; I prefer England, for my residence. Your Majesty has many delightful Retreats, of which you might make your choice; where, Happiness, as perfect as Man can ensure, would await you; beyond which, all hope is vain.

I AM of opinion, my Leige, that, by relinquishing of certain Prerogatives, and a proper use made of others, under due limitation; some certain means projected, and prescribed, to liquidate entirely, the National Debt; or reducing it so, as, sensibly and speedily, to ease the people of their burthen of odious Taxes; the Constitution being restored, amended, or new modelled, conformable to the present times, as agreeable to the People; restoring Parliaments to their original state; with due regulation, correction, and fixing the mode of electing the Members, and an adequate representation of the whole People; a total abolition of the Law of Primogeniture; together with, a reduction of the claims of the Clergy, and abolishing Episcopacy, your Majesty might still rule, and enjoy, for many years, a far greater portion of happiness than you have hitherto done, and close your Reign in Peace, in perfect harmony, in unity and concord, with the People; whose Hearts would rejoice in your Presence; and each Individual be happy, in contributing towards your Peace and Tranquility.

I FEAR, my Lord, that you have enumerated more Grievances than I can promise to redress; but, I promise your Lordship that I will seriously think of it; and will occasionally, call in on you, while I continue in this County. I

shall be glad, at my next visit, to see your Lady; and also, to see her Ladyship at Court. I shall have a pretty smart ride, to Dinner; and therefore, wishing you a good day, and a continuation of happiness, I take my leave of you, for the present, and thank your Lordship for this refreshment, and the entertainment you have given me.

TO CONCLUDE. If Government could be induced to relax a little, and condescend to abate somewhat of its rigorous severity; that is; If the Ministry were not, always, to pursue the measures adopted by them, before they had felt the pulse of the People (like a skilful Physician) in quite so positive and arbitrary a manner, and in direct opposition, frequently, to the general sense of the People; being repugnant to their Interests, and incompatible with their happiness; as in the present juncture, in commencing a War unnecessarily, with France, who were so well disposed to Peace; and particularly, to be in firm alliance with England, united in the strictest bonds of Friendship, something might yet be done, tending to compromise matters, between them and the People. Towards which most desirable Event; and in order to secure a good understanding between the KING and the PEOPLE, in future, I wou'd recommend to their serious consideration, the ADDRESS from the ASSOCIATION of the FRIENDS of the CONSTITUTION, in Dublin, of the 21st of December, 1792, in which, the DUKE of LEINSTER presided; that loyal, yet most spirited Address, seems calculated to prevent Insurrections, and wild Anarchy among the lower order of the People; it abounds with sound REASON, delivered with becoming spirit; at the same time, that it breaths an air of loyalty, and attachment to the KING, and to the Constitution of England, beyond any thing of the kind, that has been published; and, on its plan, as near as possible we can only hope in this great Crisis, for a redress of GRIEVANCES, and a security of lasting PEACE to the Nation, with unity and harmony among the PEOPLE.

F I N I S.

